THE Church of Christ IN BRISTOL,

Recovering her Vail out of the hands of them that have ſmitten and wounded her, and taken it away.

BEING,

A juſt and neceſſary Vindication, from a falſe and ſcandalous imputation caſt upon her by *Dennis Holliſter*, formerly a Member of her, but now an Apoſtate from, and an oppoſer of thoſe Waies, Truths, and People, which once he ſeemed zealous for.

As appears by a late Pamphlet put forth by him, called, *The Skirts of the Whore diſcovered.*

With ſome particular words, from ſome particular perſons whom he hath by name abuſed and reproached. Likewiſe a word by *Thomas Ewen*, unto what concerns him in the ſaid Pamphlet, and alſo to the later part of another Book, called, *Satan enthroned in his Chair of Peſtilence.*

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1 Tim. 4.1. *Now the Spirit ſpeaketh expreſly that in the later times ſome ſhall depart from the faith, giving heed to ſeducing Spirits, and doctrins of Devils.*
Acts 20.30. *Alſo of your own ſelves ſhall men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things, to draw away diſciples after them.*
Iſa. 10.24. *O my People that dwelleſt in Sion, be not afraid of the* Aſſyrian.

London, Printed for *Thomas Brewſter*, at the three Bibles at the Weſt-end of *Pauls*, 1657.


BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE READER.

Courteous Reader,

IT is but little pleasure or delight, to the Authors of the ensuing Papers, that they should fill the world, or take up thy pretious time with matters of this nature, there being at this day so many things, of so much higher concernment, for the minds of immortal Souls to be taken up With, and seriously imployed about: But we being (to our grief, and against our wills, forced hereunto,) for the vindication of the Truth, and justification of the wayes thereof,) by a late scandalous and ridiculous Pamphlet, put forth and published by one Dennis Hollister of Bristol, once a Member of this Church, and a man as famous for professing the Truth, as now infamous for and by his Apostasy from it, opposition to it, and violence against it; Who, upon the first coming of the People called Quakers, to this City, did in a short time fall in with them, own them, and plead for them; and by his so doing, drew many a poor Soul out

of the waies of Christ, and into the waies of those miserable deluded People, so that with himself, there rent from this Church, about eighteen or nineteen persons, who are now wandring in the dark, and blind paths of deceit and delusion, towards death and destruction; Whereupon the remaining part, (and through Grace the major part by far) of the Church, did after seeking the Lord, and seriously advising together, send Brethren, first to enquire after him and them, and to know the grounds of their absenting, but some would return no answer at all, others very contemptuously, slighting and scorning the Church in this their act, with many revilings as the manner of those People is: After some months time, the Church sent three Brethren to admonish them of their great evil and danger, &c. A Copy of which Admonition is in the following Papers, as likewise a particular Admonition to Dennis Hollister, *setting before him five sore and palpable evils, which we knew he was guilty of, and that every tittle of it was both true and obvious, though he doth with a most impudent and shameless face deny it, railing at the Church for their so doing, and instead of hearing the Admonition, or acknowledging his evils, did prepare a Letter with this Inscription,* For the People called Independents; *And by his subtilty engaged two of our Brethren to present it to the Church, putting such conditions upon them, as might best accomplish his designs, as that it must be openly read in a full meeting, &c. He likewise speaking to some of the Church whom he had still an influence upon, and hopes to draw off, that they should be sure to be there at the reading of that Letter, by which some of us came to understand his design, and that his Letter was not to give any account to the Church of the things whereof he was admonished, but rather to stagger and draw away more of the Congregation to himself, and to those People and waies, unto whom he was already departed.*

Which thing is since evident by many passages in his Papers as that in his Epistle to the Reader, where he hath these words, viz. My just and necessary defence is kept from the simple hearted amongst them, after whom my soul longs, and for whose sakes it was principally intended, *&c. By which all men may see that his principal intent was not to answer or satis-*

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ſie the Church, but rather to draw away ſome from it; he alſo giving out, there were yet ſuch a certain number of perſons, naming of them, that ſhould yet come away: (which the Lord through the riches of his Grace hath hitherunto prevented) and thoſe perſons in particular, are more confirmed and eſtabliſhed in the Truth, and againſt the principles and Waies of thoſe People, and much by his late Book, it being ſo filled with rage and fury, envy and bitterneſs, falſe accuſations, and raſh condemnations, having nothing in it like the Spirit of Chriſt; but the Church taking into conſideration his Letter, and firſt finding that he himſelf was out of Gods way; ſecondly, that he had refuſed to hear the Church by their Meſſengers ſent unto him; thirdly, that he did not own us as a Church in the Superſcription of his Letter; and fourthly, underſtanding his deſign to be as aforeſaid, to draw away more if he could, &c. Hereupon his Letter was not opened, but returned back and delivered to his Man-ſervant in his Shop, himſelf being then abſent; but this did ſo enrage him, he ſeeing himſelf ſo far diſappointed of his ends and aims, (and the Church in ſome ſhort time after, ſending three Brethren again the ſecond time, to admoniſh him and the reſt, according to Scripture rule, Mat. 18. *Tit.* 3.10.) *that he hath hereupon publiſhed, that moſt ſcandalous Pamphlet, called,* The Skirts of the Whore diſcovered, and the mingled People in the midſt of her, &c. *In which he doth moſt unchriſtian-like abuſe the whole Church, ſtiling her a Synagogue of Satan, and a Cage of uncleane and hateful Spirits, with many heaps of ſlanders and falſities, &c. to the diſhonor of the name of Chriſt, and the reproach of his waies and People, and to the defaming of many of thoſe, whom God, thorow rich Grace, hath preſerved faithful in this apoſtatiſing day.*

We could not therefore (without being guilty of, or acceſſary to his ſin and evil) let his folly go unreproved, but have ſet forth theſe few plain words, of truth and ſoberneſs, aiming at his confutation, the truths juſtification, our own vindication, and others information and ſatisfaction, deſiring the Chriſtian Reader, to weigh well our coddition, judge impartially of our wrong, and help us affectionately by thy prayers; and ſo we

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commit both thee and our selves, unto him who will one day clear the innocent, bringing forth their righteousness as the light, and their just dealing as the noon day; in the mean time we rest and remain; Reader, *thy friends if thou be one that art grieved for the afflictions of* Joseph, *and art sensible of this day of* Jacobs *trouble, and art longing for the welfare of* Sion, *and walking in the Faith of the Gospel.*

Then are we thy companions in tribulation, for the Faith and Testimony of Jesus.

The Brethren of the Church

in BRISTOL,

R. P. T. E. I. A.

R. M. R. S. B. H.

READER;

THou art desired further to take notice, that Separation from a true Church of Christ and Communion of Gods People, is a dangerous thing:

First, it is sharply threatned by God, Heb. 10. 38, 39.

Secondly, severely punished, 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22.

Thirdly, by this they discover themselves both to the Church with whom they walked, and also to those that are without, that they are the men and women who have not a true foundation, but onely have received some large measures of illumination, and common gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, and so fall away, and by their Apostacy, evidence their hypocrisie: Let no man think that the good can depart from the Church, wind blows not away the Wheat but the vain Chaff, 1 John 2. 19. They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt, have continued with us, but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not of us. Now to prevent the spreadings of the spirit of Anti-christ and his subtil endeavours to draw more from Jesus Christ, ought not the Church from whom these persons are departed in obedience to the Command of God, and out of love to the souls of those that have cast the Ordinances of God behind their backs, send two or three of their Members in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and in the tender bowels of pity, to beseech, admonish, and warn them to repent of their sins, and refrain from their evil waies, and return to the Truth, Faith, and waies of

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the Lord Jesus Christ, recorded in the Gospel? 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26. *and so* in meekness instruct those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth, that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his will, *&c. Let the Reader seriously consider, whether the Church is not engaged by her Head and Husband Jesus Christ*, Mat. 18. *from* 15. *to* 20. *vers. compared with* Titus 3. 10. *&c. thus to admonish and warn her deluded back-slidden Members, although perhaps some of them will not hear, as in* Prov: 10: 17. *Others reject both the Reproof and the Reprovers,* Prov: 15: 10, 12.

And lastly, perhaps another laies open his folly to the whole Nation, in casting dirt in the face not only of the Reprovers, but on the whole Church it self that sent them, and so endeavour to shame them both, see Prov: 9: 7. *compared with* Prov: 15: 12. *Our Saviour tels us,* Mat: 11: 19. *that* Wisdom is justified of none but of her Children; *and therefore his Church may not expect justification, but rather condemnation from those that are gone out from her as the snuff of a Candle.*

If it be sufficient to be accused who can be found innocent, it is the crown of those that remain stedfast in their substantial Principles, to be reproached by those that did once seemingly own them, and afterwards for want of grace backslid from them, &c.

An Answer of a Church of Christ in *Briſtol*, (who deſireth and endeavoureth according to the meaſure of light and ſtrength that they have received from Chriſt their Head, to comply with him in waiting upon him in all the Ordinances of the Goſpel, which many caſt behind their backs;) unto *Dennis Holliſter*, once a viſible Member, but now a profeſſed *Quaker*, &c.

Dennis Holliſter,

Did you never read that the Church of Chriſt in Scripture is reſembled to a natural Body, wherein are many Members united each to other, and moſt of them to one Head, and by one Spirit? now as in the natural Body there may be many infirmities; ſo alſo in the miſtical Body ſometimes it may be ſubject to diſtempers, by undigeſted humors, the want of through cloſing with divine truths, or the receiving in of untruths, may occaſion a ſurfeit; ſometimes windy humors, pride, high mindedneſs, and giving

heed to lying Spirits, by some of its Members may distemper it; sometimes feverish heats of violent headiness, instead of well tempered zeal for God and godliness may inflame it, so that many parts of it are sorely laid open to infections, from divers that seem to be of it, or converse with it. Art not thou the man, or at least one of them; oh! who hath his eyes in his head and doth not see, who hath his ears open and doth not hear, who hath his tongue untyed, and doth not speak to vindicate the undeceived's innocency, as well as to publish your folly, in answer to a little Pamphlet, called, *The Spirits of the Whore discovered*, &c. containing in it many things too low and beneath a serious Christians perusing or reading, much more the answering; it being in the middle and both ends stuft with so many unsavory and unchristian like expressions, yet we shall take the Lords counsel, *Prov.* 26 5. and so answer the Author, lest he should be wise in his own conceit: in which Answer, we shall not recite all the Absurdities, and vain boastings, and untruths, &c. yet being, as before, beneath a Christian, much more a whole Church, to spend precious time, either to read or answer, &c. neither shall we at present so lay open your folly in all things, that we have heard or seen, lest our Answer should be seven times as big as your charge. Now to proceed, consider that as every word of God is true, so hath it some more special time of fulfilling: now we read *Acts* 20. 30. *Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.* O how truly is this Scripture fulfilled this day upon us and you; first, in your departing from us, and now in those perverse things written and spoken by you, to draw away disciples after you, as is clear in many of those expressions in your Letter.

We have of late met with a little Book put forth by you, the Title of which when we had read, and seriously considered the People included and intended by you in those expressions, we could not but even stand amazed to think, unto what a height of Impudency and Malignity you are already come, and whither may not a poor fallen creature run if God stop him not? Is it not a high degree of *Luci-*

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Syriac pride, for a poor creature, to set his foot upon the necks of all the Assemblies and Churches of the Saints this day in *England* and *Wales*, calling them the Whore, (as your expressions must needs import) for if this Church in *Bristol* be the Skirts of the Whore, then other Churches in your account must needs be the Whore, we being indeed but as the Skirts, or out-casts of *Sion*: but for your hard censures we shall leave to him that holdeth the seven Stars in his right hand, and that walketh among the golden Candlesticks; in the mean time we shall take up *David's* resolution, when *Shimei* cursed him, 2 *Sam.* 16.12. *It may be the Lord will look on our affliction*, (or tears) *and that the Lord will requite good for his cursing this day.* Oh how do the daughters of the *Philistims* rejoyce, and the uncircumcised triumph? Will not every prophane person that seeth us go in the street, say, lo there goes one of the skirts of the Whore, one of the Synagogue of Satan, one of the unclean birds, &c. and if we should reprove them for it, will they not say, that one of your selves have written and published it.

Oh! had it been a *Turk*, a *Heathen*, or a professed enemy to Christ, that had done this, we could have born it, but that one who had tasted of the good word of God, and knowingly professed the Truth, for him to lift up his heel against Christ, and to crucifie him afresh in his Members, and put him to open shame, how will you look the Lord Jesus in the face at his appearing.

Poor man, you often told us there was some *Judas* in the Church, but little did we think that ever you would have acted so like *Judas*, as first to betray us with a kiss, calling us friends, and then deliver us into the hands of our enemies to scourge us with their tongues, and to spit in our faces, and so to condemne us and the way of truth which we profess, hardning their hearts against it; yea, will not all that pass by clap their hands, hiss, and wag their heads at us, and say? is this a Church of *Bristol*, that men use to call an Assembly of *Sion*? &c. are these your gathered Churches, about which there hath been so much contending of late? nay then we will continue in our Parish Assemblies still,

we will never believe ſeparation to be the way of God, nor any of the ſeparated Congregations to be the Churches of Chriſt, but rather the Synagogues of Satan, &c. O! are not theſe the thoughts and ſayings of many at this day? and how ſhall we anſwer theſe things? Muſt we not make our ſolemn addreſſes unto God? and ſay as *Nehemiah* 4. 4, 5. *Hear O our God for we are deſpiſed, and turn his reproach upon his own head* &c.

You alſo ſtile us the mingled People, whom you reproachfully call the *Independent, Baptized*, &c. O poor man, was it not enough that you had often ſpoken reproachfully againſt that bleſſed Inſtitution of Chriſt, which he in his own perſon practiſed when he was about thirty years of age, *Luke* 3. 21, 23. and left as a ſtanding Ordinance of the New Teſtament to all Generations till his coming again, you calling it as you have often done, that ugly thing of Baptiſm, and ſo taking it quite away, neither practiſing it upon your children for many years, nor allowing it to believers; but that you ſhould now with deſpiteful hatred open your mouth in blaſphemy againſt God, and againſt his Tabernacle.

Is it a light thing that you have caſt off, and do neglect to practiſe the Commands and Ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt, written in his word; but you muſt write contemptuouſly againſt them, that do in conſcience and obedience unto him, walk in the practiſe of them: you call us a mingled people, you might poſſibly have ſpoken true, had you ſaid ſo of us before you and the reſt left us, for we had (as it is to be feared) a company of rotten Profeſſors mingled amongſt us, ſome of which never brought any great honor to Chriſt, but ſince you and they left us, we do not know any ſoul in the Church, but is able to give a good account of their Faith in Chriſt, and are careful to walk in all the waies of Chriſt, ſo far as they have obtained: But for that mingling the which you mean, of perſons differing in their judgments about ſomething, &c. you know in your own conſcience, that it was and is the principle of this Church to own and receive any that are truly godly, though differing in ſome things; and ſo you your ſelf did readily receive our Brother *Simpſon* though baptized, and you gave way to another

nother of the Church to be baptized, though now you ſcornfully ſtile us a mingled People.

But the Church of *Corinth*, or the Church of the *Romans*, or the Church of *Philippi*, among whom there were many that did differ in their Judgments about ſome things, yet were not ſtiled a mingled people, a harlot, &c.

But had ſome of thoſe that went with you been faithful to their light, to have practiſed the Ordinance of Baptiſm, when they were convinced of it, they might have been ſome of the mingled too, as you call us; and what a preſervative that might have been to them, we ſhall not determine, only this is obſervable, that there was not, nor is not one of all thoſe that have practiſed the Ordinance of Baptiſm with us that have fallen away, but onely one that was long before drawn away by the People called *Free-willers*. You ſay we call our ſelves a Church of Chriſt in *Briſtol*, &c. We anſwer, hath not Chriſt called us ſo, and owned us ſo? ſurely you and others have ſolemnly profeſſed, that Chriſt hath evidently manifeſted his preſence in this Church; beſides, you and others can teſtifie that ſhe was at firſt rightly conſtituted, according to the light that God gave to his People in the work of gathering Churches at that time, but it may be you will ſay, ſhe is grown carnal and become a harlot, &c.

We ſhall not proudly boaſt, but humbly acknowledge both to the Lord and to men, that we have many weakneſſes and failings, which is matter of daily grief and complaint; but where do you find that ever Jeſus Chriſt did unchurch a People for ſuch weakneſſes as they did acknowledge and bewaile, ſo long as they did not caſt off him, nor the faith of him, nor their obedience to him; read over the Epiſtles written to the Churches, either *Corinth*, or the Churches of *Galatia*, or the ſeven Churches of *Aſia*, among whom there were many very great weakneſſes and miſcarriages; pray read and conſider, 1 *Cor.* 5. 1. 2 *Cor.* 12. 20, 21. *Rev.* 20. 3. and yet Chriſt nor his Apoſtles doth not unchurch them; and who are you then, that dare ſo proudly ſet your foot upon the neck of this poor Church, and trample her down as a harlot, a Synagogue of Satan? &c.

Again,

Again consider, who were those that are said to be of the Synagogue of Satan, *Rev.* 2. 9. & 3. 9. It was not the Churches that were called so, for Christ owned them as Churches, and stiled them so, though they had many miscarriages; but those that were stiled of the Synagogue of Satan, were a company of proud boasters, that said they were Jews and Apostles, but did lie and were not; so now consider, who are those at this day, that call themselves Apostles, and boast of perfection; do any of us do so, or do not they that ye own do so; and hath not the Church of *Bristol* tryed them and their Doctrins, and found them lyars, and their Doctrins false? as the Church of *Ephesus* did, *Rev.* 2. 2. witness *James Naylor*.

Christopher Atkinson and others, whose Books some of us have read and tryed, and have found them to be contrary to the glorious Gospel of the grace of God, which was preached by the true Servants of God, and therefore have upon a good ground rejected them according to the counsel of the Spirit of God, *Gal.* 1. 8, 9. 2 *John* 10, *vers.* But you say positively, that we are found to be a Synagogue of Satan; was it ever heard that any man, either Prophets or Apostles, or any that feared God, or expected to give an account of his words and actions, did assume that boldness as thus to judge a people professing godliness, every one of which are able to give a good account of their faith in Jesus, and that do strive to walk up to what they know? &c. Is not this to take the place of Jesus Christ, whose prerogative alone it is to try hearts and judge persons? &c. Did you not say truly, when you said you did not know Christ? and might you not have said as truly, you did not acknowledg him? for certainly did you ever think to stand before him to give an account of your hard speeches, you could never speak and write thus.

Oh that you would consider, what you have spoken and written to the grief of Christs wounded ones, *Psal.* 69. 26. If it were better that a milstone were hanged about a mans neck, and he cast into the Sea, than that he should offend one of Christs little ones, *Matt.* 18. 6. How sad is it then for you to offend and grieve, judge and condemn near 60 persons,

persons, calling them a Synagogue of Satan? &c. and that for no other cause, but that after praying for you and mourning over you, we sent three times in love and pity to admonish you of the evil of your way; you should now break out thus violently against us? O blush and roul your self in the dust, that if yet the day of Grace, and door of Mercy be not shut against you. You say it is in answer to a charge brought against you by some of the Members, &c. Truly we could have been glad that you had spared us that pains; and had not conscience of our duty, and love to the name of the Lord, and to your soul prevailed with us, more than any delight we had in that work, you had never heard of us in that kind. You say it is, by you, for the sake of the simple hearted among us, published; blessed be the Lord there are some simple plain honest hearted amongst us, had you and the rest been so, no doubt you would have stayed with us; and thus much for the first branch of your Title page.

We observe that you begin your Epistle to the Reader, as likewise your Book, with the word outward fellowship, &c. Truly we shall easily grant, that your fellowship in the things of God, was but outward; for had it been inward and spiritual in truth and sincerity, you would, no doubt, have continued in it, but as it is written, 1 *John* 2. 19. *They went out from us, because they were not of us.* We shall not spend time to answer every passage in your Letter, lest as *Solomon* speaks, *Prov.* 26. 4. *we should be like unto you*, and yet we shall answer some things, lest as *Prov.* 26. 5. *you should be wise in your own conceit.* As for those Scripture expressions in your Book, though misapplied by you, yet we hope we shall consider them, and examine our selves by them, though not as they come from you, but as they are the words of God: and as for those taunts, scorns, false accusations, judgings and condemnations, of which your Pamphlet is full, we hope we may as we have opportunity spread them before the Lord, as *Hezekiah* did the Letter that he received, *Isa.* 37. 14. We being otherwise taught than to render evil for evil, or railing for railing, but rather to bless, 1 *Pet.* 3. 9. having the example of Christ herein, as

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well as a Precept hereto, *1 Pet.* 2. 23. *Mat.* 5. 44. yet we cannot but take notice of the absurdity of your arguing and proceeding, wherein you first beg the question, and then draw what inferences you please: you first stile us a Synagogue of Satan, &c. and then heap up threatnings against us as such, &c. much like the heathen persecutors of old, who would first wrap the Saints in the skins of Beasts, and then set the dogs upon them to tear them, &c. Would you not count it an absurd thing if any man should come to you, and heap up all the Scriptures that speak against murderers, Adulterers, Drunkards, Swearers, Lyers, Theeves, &c. and apply them unto you, taking it for granted that you are such a one; and then ask you if this be not Scripture? &c. Or on the other side, if one should take all the Scriptures that speak comfort to the true Saints, in a suffering and persecuted condition, and apply them to a common thief that is cast in prison for his wickedness, or to a Malefactor that is going to suffer justly for his evil deeds? &c.

Now this is just your way of reasoning, (and many others with you) first to heap up multitudes of Scriptures that speak against the Whore of Babylon, against Anti-christ, against the Beast, and the false Prophets, against Hypocrites and Rejectors of the Gospel, and against other ungodly and wicked persons, &c. and apply all this to whom you please, either to the Churches of Christ, or to the faithful Preachers of the Gospel, or to any other godly people; right or wrong, if they stand in your way, you conclude they are such because you call them so, whereas they may as soon prove the former things against you, as you can prove the later against them; so likewise the comforts and promises made to suffering Saints, may as well be applyed to a common thief, &c. As to some of those that you stile the Servants and Witnesses of Jesus, and this we find was *Rabshaketh* his way of arguing with *Hezekiah*, 2 *Kings* 18. 22. Now had *Hezekiah* been the man, and had he done the things that *Rabshaketh* there charged him with, then he had reasoned rightly, but *Rabshaketh* was mistaken in his foundation taking the things for granted, whereas there was no such matter, for godly *Hezekiah* had done no such thing, onely *Rab-*

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ſhaketh by his wit and ſubtilty framed ſuch arguments as he thought might accompliſh his deſign, namely to draw away the poor *Iſralites* out of *Jeruſalem*, where God had ſet them, and from *Hezekiah* whom God had ſet over them, to come forth to their enemies, as you may read at large, 2 *Kings* 18. 30, 31, 32. and therefore do you conſider a little, what if you ſhould be miſtaken as *Rabſhaketh* was, who was as confident as you are; and ſuppoſe that ſome of them (at leaſt) whom you have cryed down as falſe Prophets and Deceivers, ſhould be found the Servants of Chriſt, or that thoſe Churches in *England*, that you or ſome of your way call the well favoured Harlots, or that this poor deſpiſed people in *Briſtol*, that you ſo contemptuouſly trample upon, calling them a Harlot, a Synagogue of Satan, &c. ſhould at laſt be found the Churches of Chriſt, and that he ſhould own them as his People, his Spouſe, the dearly beloved of his Soul, and as thoſe whom he had ſhed his blood for, and given Grace unto? Oh! how will you then be confounded? &c.

And why may you not be miſtaken, ſeeing you have been miſtaken thus long, though few men upon earth were more confident of, and violent for ſome things than you have been, and yet you have been miſtaken, as you now ſay? therefore take heed, ceaſe judging of Churches, perſons or things, but leave that till he come, whoſe right it is to judge, and who will judge right, but if you ſhall go on ſtill to judge us, we ſhall make our application to the Lord, as *David* did, *Pſal.* 17. 1, 2. *Hear the right O Lord*, &c. *Let our Sentence come forth from thy preſence.* But the great matter you harp upon is, that your Letter could not be received nor read in the Church, &c. Some of us had three reaſons againſt it, firſt, becauſe it was not directed to the Church, but as it were in a deriding manner, *viz. To the People called Independents*, though now you joyn *Baptized* with them; therfore if you would not own us as a Church, we might juſtly refuſe to own or receive your Letter. Secondly, you were a perſon under admoniſhing, and had refuſed to hear the Churches Meſſengers, therefore we had no warrant to read nor hear your Letter. Thirdly, ſome of us underſtood

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that your main design was to draw away some more to you, though the greatest part of the Church were fully satisfied about the falseness of your way, yet it may be, there were some weak, as there was in the Church of the *Romans*, and of the *Corinthians*, *Rom.* 14. 1. 1 *Cor.* 8. 9. But as for your jeering at our weakness and feebleness, and that we were afraid of being shaken, concluding that fear had surprised the Hypocrites, and that we were the wicked that could not stand in Judgment, &c. This is like *Rabshakeh* dealing with *Hezekiah* and the poor Jews, &c. as we told you before, but we acknowledg we are a poor, weak, and afflicted People, even the poor of the Flock whom the Lord hath yet preserved, &c. You likewise jeer at our Fasting day, which in other words you did to a Member of the Congregation, saying to this effect, What could they not open a Letter, but they must pray to their God, and now they have prayed will not their God hear them? as another of your company also jeering at our prayers, used these words, 1 *Kings* 18.26. *O Baal hear us*, &c. But the truth is we did keep many Fasting daies after you left us, and we can say, through grace, that God did not shut his ear against our prayers, for not one Soul went from us after we did so: As for your reviling and reproaching that godly man, our Brother *Simpson* by name, it may be when your Pamphlet comes into a far Country, where neither he nor you are known, some may believe what you write, but in *Bristol*, or any other place where he and you are well known, your tongue will prove no slander; for his humility, integrity, and godliness, is better known than to be darkned by your pen, but we shall leave him to clear his own innocency: As for your Epistle to the Churches and Elders in *England* and *Wales*, and particularly to those in *Essex* and *Norfolk*, we shall leave that to them, either to make their Appeals to the Lord, or their Answer to you.

This passage concerning R. Simpson was inserted by some of us without his knowledge.

As for what you observed in eminent Church-Members, and other high Pretenders to Religion, (as you say) while you sate in Parliament, and other chief places of Council and trust in the Nation, we shall say nothing to that, only this we do remember, and did observe in what a height of

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discontent you came home, and continued one while crying out against the Priests, and false Prophets, another while against Hypocrites, and sometimes concluding and saying, that al the Religion then profest in *England* was nought, and that we must find out a new Religion, at which some of us were silent, as not knowing what you had seen and observed where you had been, though some of us did reply, as we doubt not but you doe remember; but in this posture you continued till a new Religion came, which you presently within few daies or weeks embraced, without so much as setting apart one hour with the Church to enquire of the Lord, what was in the bottom of that new Religion, but rather threatning of us, that if we did not speedily come away and embrace it we were all lost, though you could not tell us of any thing we should come unto.

We come now to your chief Letter wherein you betray us again with a kiss, calling us friends, &c. As for your Preface, wherein you first disown any power that we have over you, &c. we shall not dispute that, but resolve to do our duty according to Scripture rule, *Mat.* 18. *Tit.* 3. 10, 11. and shall leave the issue to him in whose hands are the hearts of all men.

Secondly, as for your pretended faithfulness, but most unparallel'd impudency, and sensoriousness, in judging us to be no Church of Christ, but a Synagogue of Satan, and a Cage of unclean and hateful Spirits, wherein lodgeth pride, hypocrisie, envy, slandering, back-biting, railing, lying, love to this present world, and conformity to the fashions, &c.

We confess this is a sad sentence, to cloath neer threescore persons with such a spoted garment, many of which are able to give a better account of the work of grace in their souls, and of their faith in Christ, and have a more blameless conversation, than ever we could hear of you, or observe in you; what secret seeds may be in the hearts of any among us we cannot say, neither durst we proudly boast as others do, but this we must profess ingeniously that we never observed so much of those evils before mentioned to break forth upon any of those that now are together, as we have

ſeen in you, and in ſome of thoſe that are gone away with you, and we are perſwaded there is no judicious Chriſtian this day in *Briſtol*, that hath known and obſerved you and us, but will ſay the ſame thing; ſo that there being ſo many ſuch perſons with your ſelf gone from us, we hope there is ſome Reformation in the Church, but if there ſhould ſtill remain any ſuch among us, (as we hope there doth not) ſurely we ſhall be ready to deal with them, as we have done with you and others, onely we muſt know they are ſuch, for we muſt not take the railing accuſations of our imbittered enemies for a ſufficient proof.

Thirdly, you ſay, *notwithſtanding there is that in ſome of us, after which your ſoul doth greatly long, that the ſalvation of God were come out of Sion, &c.* We do believe there is many a ſoul in this Congregation, that doth long and groan day and night after more of the bleſſed Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt, that ſo they might know him better, believe on him more, love him more, and live more to him, and yet we truſt there is never a ſoul in this Congregation, but ſeeth ſufficient ground to ſtand at a diſtance from your Principles and waies; ſo that you may ceaſe hoping for any of them to come unto you, the Lord preſerving them by his grace.

We come now to the five things in your Admoniſhing, a Copy of which we having by us, do here inſert *verbatim*.

Firſt, your leaving the Church, which hath three ſad conſequences in it, as we judge: Firſt, the drawing of many away from the faith and waies of the Goſpel: Secondly, the offending, grieving and ſtumbling of many weak ſouls: Thirdly the opening of the mouths of many to ſpeak evil of the waies of Truth, as 2 *Pet.* 2. 2.

Secondly, your contemning of ſome, and neglecting of others of the Ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt.

Thirdly, your extream ſenſoriouſneſs and raſh judging, not only of perſons abroad, but alſo of the Church, contrary to *Matt.* 7. 1. *Rom.* 14. 3. alſo your calling the Church an Harlot.

Fourthly, your aſſerting in the Church Doctrins contrary to Truth: As firſt, that we did not know what Faith

was,

was, and that Faith was an eternal thing: Secondly, that Christ and Faith is all one: Thirdly, that Christ is not the object of Faith: Fourthly, your speaking reproachfully of the blessed Scriptures, affirming they were blind, and a plague to souls; and further saying, they are not the Word of God, nor the Rule of Life.

Now because you say these are studied Accusations, and from the Father of lies, &c. we shall therefore prove every tittle of these things to be true; First, that you have left the Church, is true, and that your so doing hath drawn away some, grieved others, and opened the mouthes of many to speak evil of the waies of Christ, this is clear and plain, and not a studied accusation, but a real thing, and that which hath been matter of grief and sadness to the Church, and therefore we did send to admonish you of the evil of it: Now in that you reply, *all judgment is given to the Son*, whom you say we are ignorant of, and enemies to, &c. and therefore what is our judgment worth, &c. and then you go on to heap up fourteen dreadful Sentences against us, such as the Spirit of God doth in Scripture give to Reprobates and cast-awaies, and so conclude with that 2 *Thes.* 2. 8. Now we desire any sober Christian to consider of this your Answer, (which you call your defence to our charge, of which you complain you had much wrong, because your Letter of defence was not read) whether this be a Christian-like answer to the Admonition of a Church, you not giving us herein one word or reason of your departing from us, but onely heaping up 16. or 18. dreadful Sentences against us.

The second thing you were admonished of, was your contemning of some, and neglecting of others of the Ordinances of Christ: First, that Ordinance which you contemn is Baptism in Water, which you utterly reject and cast away, neither using it to your Children, nor allowing it to Believers, but calling it as you have often done, that ugly thing of Baptism; with other bitter and violent expressions against it, to the grief of some of us: Now we did not send to admonish you for not practising of it, for we knew your judgment was against it; but to admonish

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you of your great ſin, in ſpeaking ſo contemptuouſly againſt it, calling ſome of them that practiſed it, ugly *Anabaptiſts*, as you have done in ſome of our hearing. Now whereas you call us hypocrites, &c. becauſe as you ſay, we ſent to admoniſh you for not practiſing Baptiſm by Water; you ſpeak falſly and do us wrong, for we did not ſo, but onely for your contemning of it, which we ſhall leave to the Lord of Ordinances to judge. The ſecond Ordinance which you neglect, is the Lords Supper, and ſuch other Ordinances as are practiſed, and to be practiſed in the Churches of Chriſt; which that you do neglect is clear by your practiſe, &c. And whereas you demand whether we had medled in any ſuch thing for ſome years paſt, and then fall a threatning of us again as hypocrites, with deceit and hypocriſie, &c. To which we anſwer, you ſpeak falſe again, for the Church never neglected that Ordinance of the Lords Supper any years; it is true that through your means and ſome others, the Church did forbear the practiſe of it about a year together; but it is one thing for a Church upon occaſion to forbear an Ordinance, and another thing totally to neglect it, or deny it as you do: but for your flying out as you do, in the firſt part of your Reply to this particular, againſt Inventions, Traditions, Imaginations of mens carnal wiſdom, &c. We anſwer, we uſe no Ordinace but the Inſtitutions of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which he hath commanded to be obſerved in his Churches till his coming again; in the mean while all men may ſee, we had ground to admoniſh you for the contempt of ſome, and neglect of other of the Ordinances of Chriſt; ſo that this is no lie, nor ſtudied accuſation as you call it: and whereas you ſay in the cloſe of this Reply, that Baptiſm and the Lords Supper you own; Oh! how durſt you to publiſh ſuch equivocation to the World, when in your conſcience you know, you own neither of thoſe two Ordinances, neither Baptiſm by Water, nor Breaking of Bread; why then do you uſe ſuch mental reſervations? deal plainly that men may know what you are, did you not ſay in the words preceding, that God requires truth in the inward parts, and then preſently write an abominable untruth? is there any fear of God before your eyes? &c.

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The third branch of your Admonition is, for your extream ſenſoriouſneſs and raſh judging, not onlie of perſons abroad, but alſo of the Church, calling it a Harlot, the truth of which ſenſoriouſneſs, the whole Church can teſtifie, yea we could give many particular inſtances were it neceſſary: but what need we go further than your preſent Letter, where, in your Reply to this third particular, you call the Church a Harlot, &c. and page 20. where you, rehearſing what you had ſaid amongſt us before you left us, confeſs that you did at laſt ſay, our Church was but a Harlot; and yet now you ſay this charge is falſe, and from the Father of lies, and that the Church of Chriſt you do own dearly, &c. Now here you come in again with your mental reſervation, ſaying you did not call the Church of Chriſt ſo, but the People in *Briſtol*, which you ſay is a Harlot; now is this honeſty or any thing elſe but deceit and hypocriſie: did not we ſend to admoniſh you, for calling this Church in *Briſtol* a Harlot, which you confeſs you did, and yet you ſay this charge is falſe, and from the Father of lies; we wonder who is your Father in this thing, and what appears in you but meer deceit and ſubtilty, equivocation, and mental reſervation; O! for ſhame lay aſide theſe unchriſtian practiſes; and here we deſire all Chriſtians to conſider, whether this were a ſtudied and falſe accuſation, as you ſay.

The fourth branch of your Admonition is, your aſſerting in the Church Doctrins contrary to truth, three of which are mentioned, many more might have been, &c. Firſt, you aſſerted at a Meeting in your own houſe, that as Chriſt was the great light of the World, ſo he was the great Faith of the World; and that Chriſt and Faith was all one, and that Chriſt was not the object of Faith: Our queſtion was not about the oneneſs or nearneſs that there is between Chriſt and Faith; but whether the perſon of Chriſt, and the grace of Faith were not to be diſtinguiſhed; and whether Jeſus Chriſt in his perſon, as God-Man, be not the object of Faith, as him whom man is to believe in for Salvation: Your aſſertion was, we did not know what Faith was, and that Faith was an eternal thing, alleging that Scrip-

Scripture, 2 *Cor.* 4. last. *But the things which are not seen are eternal.* This occasioned many Scriptures to be brought to prove that Christ and Faith were to be distinguished, and that Christ was the object of Faith; and though the word object be not used in Scripture in that sense, yet, we are often bid to look unto Christ for Salvation, as *Isa.* 45. 22. *Zach.* 12. 10 *Heb* 12. 2. which Scriptures were then alleged against what you asserted: Now in your Reply you allege 1 *Tim.* 1. 9 you say faith is a Mistery held in a pure conscience, hid from al ignorant and vulturous eyes, &c. in which Reply of yours, you shew your weakness, in abusing the words and sense of the Apostle, as any judicious Christian may perceive by comparing your Book with that Scripture, &c. but upon the matter you do now say as much as we did then admonish you of. And whereas you demand why we did not then question you, and that if it be for conscience sake, why had we not done it sooner, and why had we not disproved you by the Scripture, and why would we suffer things contrary to truth to be asserted among us without rebuke? &c. We answer, you were presently opposed and blamed for asserting such things, as you were at several other times for asserting such things, which in the 20 page of your Book, you call some manifestation of truth that was breaking forth in you some years past; at which some were offended, and contradicted it, &c. though for a solemn dealing with you, we did not, till you left the Church; which perhaps was our sin and your misery; but considering your spirit, and the state of the Church, we knew not how to set about it, though some saw ground enough to do it, &c.

The fifth branch of your Admonition, which was for speaking against the Scriptures, affirming they were blind, and a plague to souls, and that they were not the Word of God, nor the Rule of Life, &c.

For the first part of this branch, you did, at a Meeting again at your own house, affirm, which many took notice of, as well those that were not of the Church, as those that were, whereby the thing was publickly known in the Citie, and became a reproach to the Church; an eminent

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perſon of the Citie enquiring of one of us about it; and that you did ſpeak theſe words, is as certain as ever you did ſpeak word in your life, ſome of us ſitting over againſt you, do well remember with what kind of paſſion you ſpake it, clapping your hand upon the Book or Table, ſaying, that that Book or Scripture, was one of the greateſt blinds and plagues to mens ſouls this day in *England*; and theſe words became a reproach to the Church, upon which we did admoniſh you; and though now in your Book, you ſay that this charge is utterly falſe, and from the Father of lies, and invented by his inſtruments; yet we do again affirm, and will ſet our hands to it, that you did ſpeak theſe very words.

Secondly, for that expreſſion, that the Scriptures are not the Word of God, &c. did not you, at the red Lodge in the Garde-nhouſe, before near twenty people, ſay ſo? when one of us being by, bid you for ſhame not to ſpeak ſo; it is true, you did at a Meeting a little before you left us, propoſe it to conſideration, as a thing wherein we had been miſtaken; yet ſo, as your very propoſing of it, did imply the negative: other inſtances alſo we could give at private conferences that ſome of us had with you about the ſame thing; but what need we ſay more, do you not demand in your Book, *page* 19. where doth the Scripture call it ſelf the Word of God? to which we anſwer, we ſhall give you four plain places inſtead of many, *Jer.* 30. 2, 4. *Rev.* 17. 17. *Prov.* 30. 5. *Mark* 7. 8, 9, 13. But what ſhould we go to light a candle to the Sun? have not many judicious and godly Writers long ago proved againſt former Athieſts and Hereticks, that the Scripture is the Word of God; though neither they nor we deny, that glorious Tittle, that God the Father hath put upon the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, that his *Name ſhould be called the Word of God, Rev.* 19 13.

And thirdly, whereas you demand, to whom was the Scripture, the Rule of Life? We anſwer, to all the People of God to whom they were given, *Deut.* 4. 8. and 5 31, 32. *Mat.* 5. 6, 7. *chap. Rem.* 12. All which containeth Rules and Directions for Chriſtians to walk by; but it is

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the character of wicked men, that they cast the Law of God behind their backs.

And thus we have proved every tittle you are charged with in your Admonition, to be true and clear, so that we are no liars, nor false accusers; but we must turn that back again upon your self, professing to all the World, that you have wronged us in what you have written against us.

As for the other part of your Letter, wherein you sometimes flatter your self, and commend your self, about your righteousness, faithfulness, diligence and deserving; as likewise how freely you had served us, and been a keeper of our Vineyard, and that now it is time to look to your own Vineyard, and to mind your eternal habitation, &c. We answer first, as *Prov.* 27. 2. *Let another man praise thee and not thine own mouth, a stranger and not thine own lips:* But we never did blame you, nor admonish you, for any good you did among us, but for your departing from that which was good; *Jehu* was not blamed for the good he did, but because he took no heed to walk in the Law of the Lord God of *Israel* with all his heart; neither was *Amaziah* blamed for any good he did, but because he did it not with a perfect or upright heart; and as for your gift of discerning, &c. most of us know it was a thing you did much pretend to, and boast of, &c. though we could observe your gross mistake therein, &c. And for your now looking to your own Vineyard, and minding your eternal habitation, &c. truly we hoped you had done that when you were among us, and that your care and diligence which now you speak of, had been as well about your own soul as others: but if it were not, we wish you may make better use of your present time, than you have done of that which is past: As for any manifestations of truth breaking forth in you as you say, *page* 20. at which some of our hearts burned, and others were offended, &c. We know not any one Truth, that ever you spake in the Church, but it was readily assented to, and seconded by those that sate by; whether you did press to believing or holy walking; but for other things which were not according to Scripture, nor did not tend to faith or holiness, &c. some of us did sometimes manifest

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our diſſent from you; yet with all tenderneſs, as knowing your ſpirit, and the ſpirits of ſome others now with you, we were not willing to offend you or them. And as for that which you ſo often aſſerted in the Church, and now mention *page* 20, 21. That you did not know Chriſt, and that that knowledge we had of him ſhould profit us nothing, and that our habitation is in deceit, and through it we refuſe to know the Lord, &c. Firſt, we did not violently oppoſe you in that thing, as thinking that it aroſe from a ſight and ſenſe of the want of the Spirit of Chriſt, to open and reveal the glory of his perſon, virtues, Offices, and Myſteries, more clearly unto you, according to what is written, *Epheſ.* 1. 17, 18. *Col.* 2. 2. *John* 16. 14, 15. and herein we could and did joyn with you in complaining of the littleneſs or ſmalneſs of our knowledg of Chriſt; yet ſome of us did often tell you, that our comfort ſtood not ſo much in a ſpeculative knowing, as in a believing acknowledgment of Chriſt, to be that which he is ſaid to be in the Scriptures, and ſo to own him, believe on him, love him, and obey him; and therefore we did then, and have ſince, and do now declare, that we owned no other Chriſt, but that one annointed glorious perſon, who was born of the Virgin, and who is made both Lord and Chriſt, who died, roſe, and aſcended, and is now ſitting at the right hand of God, and is the Mediator, between God and man, who ſhall one day come again, according to the Scriptures.

Secondly, we do own no other knowing of Chriſt, but that which is according to the Scripture, namely, underſtandingly, to know him in his perſon without us, and experimentally to know him in his Virtues, or by his Spirit within us; and ſo through grace we do know him in our meaſure, and are waiting and praying daily for a further and clearer knowledge of him in his Virtues, and powers, by the revelation of his glorious Spirit, according to the Scripture; in the mean time we deſire to acknowledge him, believe on him, love and reverence him as our Lord and King, and do ſubmit to his Laws and Commands left in his Word: but we did little think, that your meaning

had been as now you declare, both in your Book, and by your practice, that you and we ſhould take up that kind of notion of Chriſt, as to call that light that is in every man, both Heathens and others, *Chriſt*, and ſo to ſlight and nullifie that glorious perſon now in heaven, from being the object of Faith, &c. as many of your way do and have done to ſome of our faces, ſcoffing and jeering at us for ſpeaking of the perſon of Chriſt, and for thinking to be ſaved by the blood of him that died at *Jeruſalem*, and as you your ſelf did jeeringly ask one of this Congregation, to this effect; whether we did believe Chriſt to be an old man, ſitting in a chair in heaven? &c. You further tell us, *page* 21. That many who deſired to ſee Chriſts firſt Appearance in the fleſh, became his betrayers and murderers; ſo now in his ſecond Appearances in life, power, and ſpirit, would be found the greateſt enemies to him, and that ſome of us would betray him; and then appeal to all that have any diſcerning to judge, how ſadly this is already fulfilled in us, &c. We grant that many did ſtumble at Chriſt when he came in the fleſh, and that many in all ages have ſtumbled at the truth, and waies of Chriſt, as likewiſe many do now at his perſon, his Goſpel, his waies, and his Ordinances, &c. which might put you to conſider two things: Firſt, whether you be not one that do ſo; and ſecondly, whether you be not one that have cauſed many to do ſo? &c. But you ſeem to beg the queſtion, and take it for granted, that Chriſt is now come in life, power, and ſpirit, in you and your party; but truly you muſt give better demonſtrations of it, before we or any other judicious Chriſtians will believe you; for we have read much, and know ſomething by experience through grace, what the ſweet, gentle, & dove-like ſpirit of Chriſt is, & we have ſeen and known by ſad experience, how unlike your ſpirit is to that: Secondly, how can you call this a murdering and betraying of Chriſt, namely our ſending brethren three times in love and pitie to enquire after and admoniſh you and the reſt that departed from us? we ſhall leave this to the Lord to determine, &c. As for thoſe ſtrange and unchriſtian expreſſions *page* 21. of our ſporting our ſelves,

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and making a wide mouth, and drawing out the tongue and the hand against you, &c. and then calling us children of transgression, a seed of falshood, comparing of us to *Ishmael* and *Cain*, &c. We shall say little to it, onely desire the Lord to rebuke your railing; yea, we say again, the Lord rebuke your railing. Have we done any thing to you or against you, more than sent three Brethren, (after many prayers made) for to seek to recover your soul. And as for our imagining a vain thing, and setting our selves, and taking counsel against the annointed one, (as you say) as likewise our joining in confederacy with the enemies of God, and that we must be broken to pieces, for the Lord of Hostes is with you, and the shout of a King is among you, &c. We see it is an easie thing, for a man that hath brain-knowledge in the Letter of the Scriptures, to heap up a multitude of good words, right or wrong: but whether we or you have set against the annointed one, whether we or you shall be broken in pieces, we shall humbly leave to the Lord of Hostes, and King of Israel to determine; but we deny that the shout of the true King is among you, though some of your way have shouted and cried, *Hosanna, holy, holy, King of Israel,* to *James Naylor*; and if you mean that King as they called him, &c. we desire with humilitie, to shout and rejoice: First, that God hath through the riches of his grace preserved us from those strong delusions, that you and others are fallen under. Secondly, that the Lord hath so wonderfully discovered, the abominable wickedness of those proud boasters and blasphemers, who called themselves Apostles, and were owned by you as infallible; & that God should do it in this Citie, even in the very faces of you, that you might see it & be ashamed, &c.

You make mention in the 22. *page*, of some of us beating in our Meetings, like the enemies of Christ in their Synagogue, &c. Now as we cannot but wonder at your shamelesness in printing such a thing; so we cannot but declare to all the world the truth of this story. You know it hath been the practice of the Women of this Congregation for some years past, (especially since the Apostacy of you and others from us) every second day of the week,

towards

towards evening, to seek the Lord by supplication and prayer by themselves; at which Satan hath much raged, and some of your way have come several times to disturb them, and in particular upon the day you mention, there came two Women, one of which had been an old *Ranter*, but now fallen into your way, the other a late Member of this Church, but now turned to your opinion; these two wretched Women came rushing into the room, (one of our Sisters being then in prayer) and so did in a most unchristian, uncivil, and inhumane manner, walk up and down the room, humming and making a loud voice, at length came to the Woman that was in prayer, and putting their mouth to her ear, uttered these words, *The prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*; and so forced her to give over praying, whereupon after many civil intreaties by some, to cause them to depart, and to leave off telling them, that there was no place for them unless they would be quiet; but this not prevailing, one of the company, an ancient godly Woman, took one of them by the arm, and would have put her forth at the door, but could not, she being too strong for her; which striving together, is that which you call a beating, and so at length the Woman of the house, claiming her privilege, did command them to depart; and this was all the beating and occasion of it, &c.

Now let all the world see the wretched wickedness of these two women which you justifie: Secondly weakness, and shallowness of your foundation upon which you build your large Discourse of 11 or 12 lines together where you heap up many dreadfull expressions against this Church for this act, calling it a beating like the enemies of Christ in the Synagogue; whereas there was but 5 or 6 women there: now is not this to justifie the wicked and condemn the righteous both of which are an abomination to the Lord? as *Prov.* 17.15. what more wicked act could there be than for these two wretched women to come humming, ranting, and roaring into the room, to disturb a company of poor Christians when they were seriously powring forth their Soules to God in prayer? &c. You desire us page 22. to read without prejudice or deceit the

83 *Pſalm* from end to end, and ſee whether our practiſe and portion be not contained in it &c. We do conclude that if you were to be our judg, the things written therein ſhould be our portion: but bleſſed be the Lord our ſentence ſhall come forth from him who will with righteouſneſs judg the poor & with equity reprove for the meek of the earth &c. but O poor deceived man, how can you apply the things written in that *Pſalm* to us, or that in *Obediah*, from verſe the 11, to the 15. as you do? What groſs darkneſs hath ſeized upon your mind, that you ſhould be crying out againſt us, and threatning of us, for that which we through grace, are innocent of, and you your ſelf ſo notoriouſly found to practiſe, for are not you joined with all the *Papiſts*, *Athieſts*, *Ranters*, and ungodly rabble of the world, in this one great deſign of the Devil, to break in pieces the Churches of Chriſt in *England*? Hath it not been the attempt of one power and party after another, to rout, break, and ſcatter the Congregations in *England*, under the name of *Independents*, *Anabaptiſts*, *Sectaries*, and *Schiſmaticks*? &c. And hath any party gone ſo far in this wicked practice, as you and your company, that call themſelves *Quakers* have done? Nay, was there ever any partie in *England*, or the Nations adjacent, that have offered the like violence to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in his perſon, in his Word, in his Goſpel, his Ordinances, his Saints, his waies, &c. as you and your partie have done? And what have thoſe poor ſheep done? have we, (or have not you rather) joined with the Perſecutors of the waies, and people of God at this day? poor man! where are your eyes? are not you joined in practice with the moſt embittered ſpirits in *England* againſt the people of God, whom you and others make the objects of your ſcorn? Nay, do not Athieſts, Drunkards, and prophane perſons, cry *Aha*, at the reading of your Book? Have you not pierced the ſides and hearts of Chriſts wounded ones, and will not this be bitterneſs in the later end? Nay, have you not out-ſtripped all others in lies and falſhoods, ſlanders and reproaches, ſcoffs, ſcorns, and deriſions, which in your Book you have unjuſtly caſt upon us, teaching the wicked of the

world,

world, yea, even the children that have no understanding, how to blaspheme, and call the Churches and Servants of Christ, the skirts of the Whore, Synagogues of Satan, and cages of unclean birds? have you not made our Saviour to stink in the nostrils of all the Nation, at the least of so many as do not know you and us, but will credit your untruths,&c. O! stand still, smite upon your thigh,& blush for shame at what you have done. Suppose the things had been true, which the Lord knows they are not true, which you lay to our charge, was it not the part of wicked *Ham*, to proclaim his Fathers nakedness? but as you say to us, so say we now unto you; what should we advise, we perceive your heart is heardned and you will not hear? O! that we could mourn for you! your last clause in your Letter is, That from henceforth we should not trouble you or our selves by word or writing; when we have performed the last Ordinance that Christ hath left for persons in your condition, unless God give you a new heart, which we should be glad to hear of, we shall not trouble you: And so to close up what at present we shall say to you; take notice, that whereas you lay blame upon our Brethren, whom we sent to admonish you, of whose faithfulness we doubt not in discharging their trusts to you and the rest; we do desire them to answer for themselves, that their faithfulness may appear as visibly as your folly.

Signed in the Name and by the consent and appointment of the whole Church, by us,

Robert Purnel, *Thomas Ewen*,

John Andrews, *Richard Moon*,

Robert Simpson, *Brian Hanson.*

A Re-

A Reply of the three Messengers of the Church, to an untrue Charge or Report of *Dennis Hollister*, in a little Pamphlet called,

The Skirts of the Whore discovered.

Dennis Hollister,

BEfore we make our defence to your passionate, heady, untrue report of us, we shal set down in order the Churches order, & our commission from God by them, to admonish your self and many others in your case, *Viz.* The Church taking into consideration, the great dishonor brought to the Name of God, the publick scandals and reproches cast upon the wayes of Jesus Christ, to the wounding and piercing of him afresh, and to the grieving of the hearts of many pretious Saints, stumbling the weak, and opening the mouthes of the adversaries.

We, the whole Church, do again the second time, according to the Scripture-rule, *Mat.* 18.15 to the 20. *Tit.* 3 10, &c. in the name of the Lord *Jesus* our Saviour, and in tender bowels of pitie, and love to your souls, beseech, admonish and warn you to repent of your sins, and refrain from your evil ways, and to return to the truth, faith, and ways of the Lord *Jesus Christ* recorded in the Gospel, that if it be possible, the glory of God may be recovered, reproches, scandals and stumbling-blocks removed, our souls refreshed, and your soul eternally saved, which is the desire and end

of the Church, in the performance of this their duty to the Lord, and ſervice to your ſouls.

We do alſo appoint and deſire three of our brethren, *viz. Robert Simpſon, Richard Moon, Robert Purnel*, to admoniſh them, to whom we ſhall give the particular things to admoniſh each perſon of, &c.

We the three Meſſengers of the Church above named, having knowledge of the Churches order, and having received our Commiſſion from God by them as to this work, We three only met together, and conſidered ſeriouſly of the particulars that we were to admoniſh our back-ſlidden brethren and ſiſters of. Moſt of which we knowing our ſelves they were guilty of; and for thoſe things we knew not our ſelves, we were fully ſatisfied by the mouthes of many faithful true witneſſes, that were eye and ear-witneſſes to the reſt; ſo we being fully ſatisfied in every particular, we did in the name of the Lord, and in obedience to his command, in a filiall fear to God, love and pitie to your ſouls, admoniſh one after another as we had opportunity, &c.

Now *Dennis Holliſter*, you have falſly accuſed us in your pamphlet, *pag.* 3. in ſaying we charged you with falſe accuſations, and as ſoon as we had done, fled away as men ſurprized with fear, or accuſed by their own conſciences, &c.

For the firſt of theſe, that the things we charged you with all are true in every ſyllable of it, doth at large appear in the fore-going anſwer to the whole Church: and for the ſecond, whereas you ſay, as ſoon as we had done, that we fled away as men ſurprized with fear, or accuſed by our own conſciences, &c. this is as falſe as the reſt; for through grace we did not fear you, neither did our conſciences accuſe, but excuſe us in what we did, as being then, and ſtill are, fully ſatisfied we had done that which was our duty; Now if you will know the reaſon why we did not ſtay with you after we had done our work with you, then let us tell you that you may remember when we were ſent by the Church with the firſt admonition, ſome of us ſtaid with you above an hour, and found your ſpirit in ſuch an ill frame even as a boyling Furnace boyling over, and ſcalding all that ſtand near it; this

made

made us resolve in the strength of Christ, not to stay so with you the second time, unless we could discern your spirit to be in a better frame: but as soon as we perceived you not to hear the Messengers of the Church, but in stead thereof we discerned some violent headiness breaking forth, as before, &c. So we left you as one not in a capacity for Christians to converse withall. Much more we might say, but we judge your tongue or pen can be no slander to us, as to any serious Christians, our stability as to all substanciall principles of religion, being as well known as your mutability. We subscribe this with our hands.

Robert Simpson,

Richard Moon,

Robert Purnel.

Prov. 18. 17. *He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.*

Vers. 19. *A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong City, and their contentions are like the Bars of a Castle.*

Jude 22. *And of some have compassion making a difference.*

23. *And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted with the flesh.*

A true Answer of *Robert Simpson* to a Pamphlet lately put forth by *Dennis Hollister*, intituled, *The Skirts of the Whore discovered.*

Mat. 5. 38. to the end. Luke 6. 27, 28, 29. Rom. 12. 17. to 22. Heb. 12, 15.

I Intend by the grace of God to forbear giving like for like, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, reproach for reproach, through the infinite abounding grace of God extended to me by Christ, in some measure I have learned otherwise.

And your censorious bitter language, and judging without, nay against the Rule which God hath set as bounds for us not to pass over; in which judgings of yours you climb up as high as the Temple of God, I shall say little, or but small, to you about, but in reference to that seriously consider these places, 2 *Thes.* 2. 1 to 13. *Rom.* 14. 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. The Lord give you to see your wickedness in your bitter censorious spirit, which sure is not small, though you seem not to discern it, but cover it with a covering that is not of Gods Spirit, and so add sin to sin, and the good Lord give you repentance for it, you have not hurt or injured me at all by it, though your self you do; God hath of his infinite goodness, made your hard false speeches, and censorious

Ezek. 16. 1, 2. Isai. 30. 1.

forious judgings of me, of good use to me, though no thanks at all to you for it nor any thing but what is said to think on can you reap from it.

As I have said to you sometimes upon the like occasion, when you affirmed unto me that some men, to wit, such as then you had in admiration, though for that in which they exceeded, or God owns above others, I never saw nor yet heard, but this you affirmed to me concerning them, that when they were in the light, they could see what mens inward states was before God; some of which as you said, they saw you named to me, though such as they never saw, nor yet heard of any thing visibly apparently evill by them; by which man, by the blessed Rule of the Scriptures of truth, is to judge: otherwise our rule is to judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shal every man have praise of God. Matth. 7. 16. 19, 20. 1 Cor. 4. 5. Deut. 29. 22.

My answer then to you in that affirmation concerning them, was this in words, or to the same effect; that as I could give no credence to such assertions groundedly, but contrarily had more than ground of jealousie to be suspitious they were delusions, as all such things and pretended revelations be, which have not the Law and the Testimony to warrant them: So what if all the men in the world, did approve me, what is that in order to certain ground of holding up my head before God in reference to it? So, if all did disapprove me, yet upon, & from such a ground, as that I have a sure word, & certain witness of Gods approving of me, I should not flagg in my Spirit, nor hang down in reference to that. That also (besides others) as to my self I have endeavoured to make of those great charges you lay upon me; and if your considerations were otherwise of me, as sometimes it hath been, and also of others, I would not in the least heed or give any regard to it, so as to flesh my self from it, *Phil.* 3. 3. Isai. 8. 20. 1 Cor. 4. 4. Job 10, 15. 2 Cor. 10. 17, 18. 2 Cor. 5. 9. Phil. 3. 3.

The charges indeed that you lay upon me, and send me clouched with before the world, if so indeed, how sad were my condition; well might my countenance be changed, and my

my thoughts be troubleſome unto me, and the joynts of my loyns be looſed, and my knees ſmite one againſt another, as if I did inhabit deceit, and deviſe wicked imaginations, and ſpeak lies to you, and that in the name of the Lord, and the like. Sore charges they be, wickedneſs of the higheſt degree, and of the dangerouſeſt attendance that can be.

Rom. 8. 33, 34. Pſal. 3. 2, 4, 5. Job 34. 29.

But truly it is ſufficient to me, that under all the charges you load me with, that I have alwayes a witneſs in heaven, and brought into my own heart from thence, and confirmed unto me by the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father and the Son, by which I am cleared of your charges, and ſo by that means they take no hold upon me, God gives me much eaſe under all your clamors. Truly, it is a very ſmall matter to me to be judged of you, (I ſay of you) who are more than apt to judg all, both perſons and things, to be light, that bears no weight in your Ballance.

To wit, your own private ſpirit and conſidera ion, 2 Pet. 1. 20, 21.

By which Ballance I know you muſt not your ſelf be weighed at the great day and appearing of the Lord *Jeſus*: but by that Ballance or Rule, that who ever walk according to it, peace and mercy ſhal be upon them; the Word that Chriſt hath ſpoken muſt judge all at that day.

John 12. 48.

But truly *Dennis Holliſter* I pitie thee, methinks I could even mourn over thee in the conſideration of thy being in the Divels work and imployment, to wit, an accuſer of the brethren, as I am ſure thou art in thy printed Papers.

Rev. 12 10. Luke 3. 14. Matt. 43, 44

And for that falſe charge (as it is altogether) of my ſpeaking lies to you in the name of the Lord.

That charge of yours, I know, hath reference to my being (as you ſlightly ſay) the mouth of three Meſſengers ſent to you by the Church to admoniſh you of your ſins, (which ſins of yours I am ſure was obvious, viſible and clear.) Truly in order to that, I knew well what I ſpake, when I ſpake on that rate I did unto you. I with my brethren that came with me, had a Warrant ſealed and given forth to us from him who hath all power given unto him in Heaven and Earth, for what we did. And if I may ſpeak it without boaſting, as I truſt I do, ſo we did attempt it, as thoſe that God had vouchſafed that grace unto,

Mat. 28. 18. Mat. 18. 16, 17, 18.

unto, to take up into the Mount with him, to confer with his Majesty by Christ about it, before we did dare to attempt upon it, his Majesty being pleased graciously to incline our hearts in some measure of holy reverence, feare and trembling, and in faith to wait upon his Majesty by Christ our Mediator and Intercessor, and we had a gracious answer from him by Christ, to our very hearts about it. And so we are strenthened to that work of the Lord, which otherwise we had rather any had been sent about than we. And then we went not staggeringly, nor yet ignorantly, but knowingly and understandingly about it, God having in some measure fitted us for it, and left us not without some sure witness, that he was with us in it. Exod. 3. 11. Jer 6.7, 8, 9,

And not any reluctancie have I or my brethren had for what we did; but are fully satisfied that what ever was set upon you, and laid at your door as your sin, to a tittle is true, and will be so found when the Lord shall lay Judgment to the Line, and Righteousnesse to the Plummet, and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place. Isal. 28, 17.

And whereas you say in the first line of your Letter to me, that it came upon you in soberness to manifest to my conscience, a little of the deceit in which as you say, I inhabit.

That it came upon you to write to me, that is not questoned, but did it indeed come upon you in soberness, look back, recall your self, it's possible you may be mistaken, is it not? Je. 17. 9, 10. 1 Tim. 1 4, 5, 6, 7. 1 Tim. 4. 7. 2 Tim 2, 16, 17, 23.

The occasion of your writing of it (which I would here relate, but that then I should be too tedious as wel as be of little use to the Reader as all such Discourses usually be) the tumult and heat which you gave a clear manifestation of but a little before you writ and sent it, may give, I say, at least a reall ground of jealousie, that it came not from a Spirit in a sober frame at that time.

And sure when you are come to your selfe, as I may say,

ſay, into a ſober mind, you will not ſay it came upon you in ſoberneſs to write what you did, and when you did write; ſure were you not in that altogether a ſtranger at home, you would charge upon your ſelf paſſionateneſs, even this, that the occaſion of your writing of that, and moſt, if not all that you writ and ſent abroad concerning others, came from a fire indeed kindled in you, but not from a Cole from off the Altar, but from a violent heat of wild-fire that came upon you, and was then in you, by which you were hurried, and in that hurry you writ and ſent it.

Jam.1.17. Jam.3.17,18, 13,14,15. Gal.5,22,23. Sure that ſoberneſs that is put into the heart by God, which is one of thoſe good and perfect gifts that cometh from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, is juſt as that Wiſdom is which cmometh down from above, which is firſt pure, then peaceable, eaſie to be intreated, gentle, full of mercy and good works, without partiality and without hypocriſie.

1 Sam.15.13, 14. Phil.4.5. If that ſoberneſs you ſpeake of were of that nature, or had that ſtamp upon it, how comes it to paſs, that, that which you ſay came upon you in ſoberneſs to write, had ſo little (if any thing at all) of that Wiſdom that is from above in it. That moderation that the Apoſtle exhorts Saints to make known to all men, nothing at all is of that in your printed paper, clearly manifeſts to any indifferent, ſober, unbyaſſed man; but moſt (if not all of it) o-otherwiſe.

And ſure that which you ſay came upon you in ſoberneſs to manifeſt, had little of any thing at all of that Wiſdom that is from above, which in order to the ſame is firſt pure, but indeed that which is poynt blank contrary to purity of hearts, to true ſpeaking, was it ſtuft withall. And ſo I come to ſpeak and give a true Anſwer.

I deſire with that which is reall ſoberneſs indeed, to the main thing in your Letter to me, in reference to which you ſo ſport your ſelfe, and inſult over me as a Lyar, and ſo preſent me before all, as one that ſhall have his

part

part in the Lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone, which is the ſecond death. Rev. 22. 15. Rev. 21. 7, 8.

Whereas indeed not any thing at all was a lye in what I aſſerted, but what I ſaid you had my Hand unto, as my particular affirmation, that I ſay ſtill, and that groundedly and truly you cannot manifeſt, much leſs have you any ground at all to lay that upon me which makes a lye, or any other ſin, out of meaſure ſinfull, in order to the aggravations of it, (to wit) that it was a Lie invented, a Lie proſecuted, a Lie denied, and a Lie proved upon me; which words you ſay to me in the printed letter to me: Sure you were not in a ſober mind when you ſaid ſo, I am ſure of that, but a great diſtance from it and true ſpeaking.

And I cannot but think if you did indeed commune with your own heart, that light that is in you, and is in all men, if not put out, it would tell you ſo, and that it is a very ſlender proof that you have of it.

I could wiſh that in plainneſs and ſingleneſs of heart you had put out that Letter you have under my hand from end to end, as you did the Letter you ſent to me, but that is forborn by you, for what end you beſt know: but had it ſo been, I know you had not gained any thing at all by it, to be a proof of what you would charge upon me. Had you in *Simplicity*, and *godly honeſty* with it, declared how you came by it, and upon what account it was given unto you, which for ſatisfaction to the Reader, I ſhall truly relate.

You know that after I, with my brethren, had endeavoured to ſet your ſins upon you, and to admoniſh you for them: afterwards I meeting with you, or rather as I think, you calling of me in to ſpeak with you as I went by your ſhop, you deſired of me a Copie of the Churches charge of ſin, that I with my brethren did admoniſh you for, from the Church, (which, ſaid you to me, I know you have a Copie of) I was not free and forward to do it as you did well perceive; not as if I was unſatisfied of the warrantablene's of the doing of it; I was ſatisfied, I might, though I told you

 then,

then, I could not do it as from the Church, I being but a single person: But that waywardness that was in me of giving you a copie of the Churches charge of your sins, sprang from some jealousies that I had, that you would but busy your self with it, because of that fierce violent spirit that was manifested from you against your Reprovers, and that obduratenes that lay upon you.

Yet with your more than once or twice perswading of me with importunity and intreaty, I did engage my self to you to write out a copie, of what the Church by us did charge as sin upon you; which I did truly, and deliver to you: and yet it was both promised and delivered to you, with this engagement, and actuall promise on your part, which I bound you to that you should not make use of it, for the making of that breach wider, that the wicked one by his Instruments had made here, I at that time saying these words to you, or to that effect, *I am sure that I would be loath to be found a setter up of partition walls, I had rather God would make all his people diligent, mindfull and carefull, of minding the things that make for peace, and by which we might edifie one another.* Which you gave me a promise of; how clearly and fully you have broken your promise and personall engagement, you cannot be ignorant, unless wilfully ignorant.

So according to my promise to you, to which I was made more forward then else I should have been by your solemn promise,, I brought you a true copie of the charge of the whole Church of your sin, not any one of them but did agree in it, and did also agree to send us with it; but the copie that I brought you, I did not bring it signed then with my hand at it, for indeed I was jealous of your spirit, notwithstading your promise, who will wring and screw out of words that which they speak not, and which those that speak them, intend not,

Which was the cause I had not then set my hand to it: but you looking at it, and seeing my hand was not then to it, you intreated me to set my hand to it, that it was a true Copie of the Churches Charge of those sins,

for

for which I, with my brethren from them, did admoniſh you, I not conſidering what end you had in it; which was, it appears, to make me a tranſgreſſor before all: in that your own conſcience cannot but tell you I was clear, you tendring me a pen with ink in your ſhop, with the Copie I brought to you, I ſet my hand to it.

And what did I ſet my hand to? you know, ſpeak truth, deal plainly and ſingly, do not evade and equivocate, though too much you have of that in your printed paper, in that you do profeſs you own Baptiſm and the Lords Supper, or breaking of Bread, as Inſtitutions and Ordinances of Chriſt, whilſt it is viſible to all that have eyes, that in your owning of them you give no anſwer at all to thoſe that upon good grounds queſtion you about them (juſt ſo you deal with me) you know that what I ſet my hand to, was that; that which I delivered to you, was a true Copie of the Churches Charge, and that is all that you have my hand to, in reference to which you make ſuch a noyſe all over, in order to which there is meerly by you the ſounding of braſs, and the tinkling of the Cymball, onely the beating of the aire. But to winde up this troubleſome diſcourſe, as to me it is, in which I would have been altogether ſilent, if not, drawn and put upon it by weighhty conſiderations.

I ſhall propoſe this before you, take it and conſider of it

Say it be thus; That apparent injury and violence is offered to you in that which is near and dear unto you, ſay your neareſt relations, or to your name and eſtate, which I conceive you would preſerve and reſcue to your power, by all lawfull means, from thoſe forces that is put upon them, and injuries done to them, you being really ſatisfied without any the leaſt ſcruple or queſtion, that ſuch violence and injury is done to them, though your ſelf was not perſonally preſent and ſaw all done, though the moſt part of it you did; yet you being ſo clearly ſatisfied about that part you ſaw not, that the fact in every part of it, is as clear to you as the Sun at Noon-day. Now if in this caſe of yours that

doth so nearly concern you: you should go, and from those from whom you could not have the least suspition from, of speaking otherwise than right in every Tittle.

Deut. 17. 6. Deut. 19. 15. Mat. 18. 16. And from those from whom you are so fully satisfied, besides the testimony of many standers by, about two or three Witnesses by which the matter is established.

I say, in this case should you go in a sober and Christian way, and tell such as have done that injury, and put that violence upon you of it, and debate the matter with them, telling of them they were much out of the way; they were injurious in what they did, and the end of it without repentance, would be very sad and lamentable. Do you think that in this case fair & even dealing were measured out unto you, in case you should be rendred as a Lyer all over the nation for it, because you did not see it every bit your self, though the most part of it you did; and what little part you did not, you had certain reall true testimonie of, not to be questioned? I judge you would not.

This is the naked reall case I conceive between you and I, in reference to that for which you so foully fall upon me, and tell me for it in your printed paper, that I am without, and for the Lake, and have a proud look, and a lying tongue, and a heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, which indeed the Lord hates, and say I have uttered perverseness; and as the false witness shall not go unpunished. Whilst I spake nothing but what was true in every Tittle of it, and could not forbear to speak, but with the making of my self guilty of your sin, having that clear Call to speak it which I had, the most part of it being that, which to my grief I heard my self, and that which I did not hear, I was fully satisfied of by true, clear, and unquestionable proof. I would leave this to you to make application of, as in order to that, that you write in your Letter concerning me.

Lev. 5. 1. Lev. 19. 17.

But, sure I am, you did offer apparent violence and injury to that which should be nearer and dearer to us than our nearest relations, much more our names and estates.

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I saw and heard it; almost all the particulars you were charged with; that which I did not hear, I wanted not satisfaction in.

Now being called to put to my hand with others, to see if I could be a means to recover you out of the snare of the Divel, and the pretious Institutions of Christ from those forces and violences that you offered to them: judg right; am I, think you, for this to be blamed? you do, it is true, but I pass not for it, if that make me vile, as to you it doth, I resolve to be more vile.

So that by what I have said as to your great charge against me, I stand clear, and never had you my hand in particular, to that which I said, I heard not, & you well know it your own self, though I said I was not there when you spake so reproachfully of the blessed Scriptures of Truth; yet I said I did believe it, and yet do; and you know you had not my hand to any thing but this, that, that which I delivereed to you at your your request and solicitation, was a true copie of that the Church sent us to admonish you for; if it be not, prove that, and then I shall own the condemnation as just, that you lay upon me for being a Liar, which I knowingly know you cannot, and t ll that you say nothing at all in order to your great charge: but only quibble at words, catching to get some hold so of me, but cannot. Rom. 2. 1, 2, 3

Besides, it was some good space of time after you had that, you have my hand to, ere you did pick any quarrell with me about it, though if you had pleased you might have spoken with me every day, I think, in my passing to and fro, or at the least word of yours sent to me to desire it, and, I judge, I should not have denied it.

But I conceive you had not spoke when you did, but that you were heared by that fire that is sure from beneath by my contesting against that held out by you, which I desire to war against by the Spirit and spirituall weapons, so long as I have any being, and not otherwise, as being fully satisfied that onely such a war, of that kind and nature, is to be maintained; the wrath of man and carnal weapons not being Rom. 6. 13. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5, 6.

2 Thess 2.8. 2 Tim.2.24, 25, 26. 1 Tim.1. 18, 19. 1 Sam.17.45. 47.50. Rev.12 7,8, 9,11.

being appointed of God, and so not under a promise of a blessing from him, to bring down and to naught such wickedness. And indeed I am clearly and in some measure satisfied by God, from that most sure word of prophesie, whereunto we do well to take heed, that one main cause why the Lambs Warriours and Souldiers gain no more ground than they do against the Lambs and their enemies and opposers, both those enemies within, and those enemies they combat withall without, is because such contests and combats with them, the war is so little maintained by the Spirit and spiritual weapons, which if it were, sure they would flie and fall before them.

And immediatly after you have subscribed the Letter you sent me, in the third line of the next page you say concerning your Letter that you sent me, you have received no answer of me; this is true, but did I promise to send you an answer? If so, you might charge me home, which I know you would not spare: But I did not, neither indeed could you groundedly expect any answer from me of it, if in a sober mind: but yet that had been done, but that the bearer, by whom you sent the Letter to me, by some thing that he proposed to me, which had weight in it, did perswade me not to meddle in such vain fruitless janglings, as to that effect some of his words was to me, by which I was detained from writing to you; and indeed his counsell in that was sound and savourie,

And whereas you mention that *Festus*, a Heathen *Roman* Governor, was so noble, that he heard *Pauls* defence, as to the accusation made against him by his own Countreymen; and King *Agrippa* said, Thou art permitted to speak for thy self: but, say you, you are falsly accused, condemned and refused to make your defence.

First, I say, you are not falsly accused, condemned and refused to make your defence, that is but your own saying, it is a meer aerie vapour.

Secondly, were you not desired, nay intreated to come and appear, and so if you had any thing to say, to speak and make your defence? Do you not wel know, that libertie

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was never denied unto you? but what ground, I pray you, hath one in your caſe to expect the making his defence that way you would do, by a *Proxes*, as I may ſay, with refuſing to come face to face, as *Paul* did before *Agrippa* and *Feſtus*, that you know you were intreated and deſired to do, and therefore in your naming of them in order to that you name them for, you ſpeak nothing at all; you were permitted to do it as they were and might have done, as *Paul* did; and I hope that groundedly; an evener Rule, and another kind of dealing had you found than what *Paul* was tried by, or he found from them, though I know you are more than apt to conclude otherwiſe of all that is not of your ſtature; but I fear ſenſe of guilt lay ſo open upon you, as that if you ſpeak truth, that was it that kept you away from making your defence in that way, that was clear by that Rule, we are to go by in the managing of the things of Gods Houſe, and ſo not any would have denied or excepted againſt you in a warrantable way, which you had free liberty to do; and then before your ſelf, if not falling down under the ſins charged upon you: all in every particular had been proved, ſo as that you could not juſtly have excepted againſt the Charge in no part of it; and I believe that would have been done by ſome of thoſe, if not all, for whoſe ſakes, as you ſay, you made that you ſent, and was not read viſibly.

So ſimple honeſt hearted they were, and ſo remain, as that they, to ſave you out of the ſnare of the Divel, would have in ſoberneſs of Spirit, in conſcience of their duty to God, and in love to your ſoul, witneſſed before you that which was charged upon you.

But I forget my ſelf, now a true Anſwer you have of all that Letter which in particular you ſent to me, with a ſmall touch upon ſome thing, that in order to the not ſending you an anſwer you ſpeak to me afterward; I confeſs I have more words in my anſwer than I would or intended. But I could not tell how plainly to anſwer it ſo, as to ſatisfie the Reader in a briefer way.

Iſai. 43. 2. 1 Pet. 4. 19. 1 Pet. 2. 15. & 3. 1. 16. Pſal. 37. 32.

It is probable a flood you will caſt after me, but I paſs not,

not, such floods shall not drown me, nor such fire burn me; I resolve, in the strength of Christ, in the way of wel-doing, to commit my self to him who in this I know will bring forth my righteousnes as the light, and my judgement as the noon-day, and so to labour, by well-doing, to put you to silence in this, as not knowing any way otherwise better to do it. And for your self, I have, if my heart deceive me not, no coar at all against you; but could be glad I might be of any use unto you, and could rejoyce to see God recovering of you out of the snare of the Divel, by giving of you repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, the which I am sure you are departed from; which is the greans of your Friend, who is a lover of your Soul, though a Witness against your fallhood and deceit.

Robert Simpson.

A

A WORD to DENNIS HOLLISTER BY THOMAS EWEN.

Dennis Holliſter,

I Have of late met with a Book put forth by you, in which there is a Letter formerly written by you to me, which Letter I acknowledge I received above a year ſince; and having read it, I laid it by, intending never to have Anſwered you, *leſt* (as *Solomon* ſaith, *Prov.* 26. 4.) *I alſo ſhould be like unto you:* but now you having publiſhed it (with your folly) to the world, I take my ſelf bound to Anſwer you, *leſt as* (Prov. 26. 5.) *you ſhould be wiſe in your own conceit, &c.*

In the ſecond Branch of your Title page, you ſay, That I have before ſeveral witneſſes often denied my ſelf to be a Miniſter of the Goſpel; in which you deal like your ſelf, though not like a friend, nor like a Chriſtian: but as for your ends in ſo publiſhing, I ſhall leave to him by whom Actions and Spirits are weighed, who will preſerve the faithful, and plentifully reward the proud doer.

I ſhall therefore with all plainneſs, ſoberneſs, and faithfulneſs, declare (both unto your ſelf, and alſo to the world) upon what grounds, and in what ſenſe, I have ſometimes denied to be called *Miniſter*, though I never denied my ſelf a Preacher of the Goſpel.

But the first ground upon which I denied the title of Minister, was this; When you with many others, as I shall farther shew, had prevailed with me to come to *Bristol*, I gave it under my Hand to the Mayor, Aldermen, and Commissioners, That I should not come as a Parish Minister to take any Parochial Charge upon me, but rather as a Publike Preacher of the Gospel in the City, by way of Lecture, and so I have (sometimes by word, sometimes by writing, as I had occasion) denied my self to be a Minister of any Parish in *Bristol*; so that I never did, nor I hope never shall own my self a Minister of any Parish, &c. so that this is the first ground, and this you know in your Conscience to be true, and that I did it in tenderness of Conscience, though now you make it matter of reproach.

Secondly, I have sometimes (as it is like in your hearing, and some others) denied my self a Minister in Office, I having not then been Called, Constituted, or Ordained to any Office in any Church otherwise than by the unanimous Consent, Approbation, and Request of this Church of *Bristol*, to serve them in the Lord, as that other godly man who left the City at my coming hither had done before me, I alwayes distinguishing, between a Person sent forth to preach the Gospel to the World, and a Person Called, set apart, and Ordained to Office in a Church: whether this distinction were right or no, I shall not now dispute, but this was your judgement then, and therefore in this you deal unworthily in publishing this to the world, to my reproach, whereas you know in your Conscience, that I never denied my self to be a Preacher of the Gospel, nor a Minister, or Servant to this Church, but only that I was not a Minister by Office, at least by an actual, and solemn Ordination.

Thirdly, There is yet another ground (as the Lord only, who is the searcher of hearts knows) upon which I have often put off, that honour and dignity, when you and others have put that stile or title upon me, my heart hath secretly answered, What am I that I should be called so,

ſo, I being a poor inconſiderable worm, the leaſt in my fathers houſe: which have often brought thoſe words to my mind, *Amos* 7. 14 *I was no Prophet, neither the Son of a Prophet, &c.* and this did ariſe from the ſenſe I had of the honour and dignity, weight and excellency of that high Calling, and the great unworthineſs and unfitneſs that I ſaw in my ſelf of ſo glorious an employment, and this alſo I am perſwaded you know in your Conſcience, that I have often hinted unto you in private diſcourſe, and when you have ſpoken of me, and to me, (more indeed than was fit for any wiſe man to ſpeak to the face of any Chriſtian) namely, what God had done in *Briſtol* by me ſince I came hither, &c.

But that I have been, and am through the grace of Chriſt (though the unworthieſt upon earth) yet a Preacher and publiſher of the glorious Goſpel, of the grace of God both in *Wales*, and now in *Briſtol*, I have no need to ſeek a proof of you, nor of any other man; I having had

Firſt, The approbation, and recommendation of a Church of judicious Saints in *London*, where I had been for ſome time a Member, and unto whom my Principles as to matters of Religion, my Gift as to the work of Preaching, and my manner of life was well known.

Secondly, I having been ſolemnly ſent forth by a Church of Chriſt in *Wales*, with Prayer and Supplication, recommending me to the Work and Grace of God, appointing me to Preach the Goſpel in *Wales*, where, though I was accompanied with manifold weakneſſes and temptations, yet the Lord was pleaſed to give me ſome Seal of my Miniſtry, the lawfulneſs of which Call, and ſending forth to my work of Preaching, I could ſufficiently prove, both from Scripture, and from the practiſes of the Churches of Chriſt: but of that more hereafter.

Now I having continued Preaching in *Wales* about the ſpace of three years, it came to paſs that ſome Overtures were made by the people of this City for my coming hither, and your ſelf, with a Miniſter then of this City, came as Meſſengers to treat with the Church of *Llanhacha*, in

Wales, to ſpare me to this place, which though at firſt they denied, yet the importunity of many here (and as ſome have ſaid) the inceſſancy of Prayer prevailed, ſo that that Church did conſent that I ſhould come, and ordered that a Letter ſhould be written to acquaint the City and Commiſſioners, *That if they could prevail with me, I ſhould come unto them, &c.* Whereupon as you know there was two Letters ſent unto me, the one from the City, ſigned by the then Major, ſome Aldermen, (one of which was then a Parliament man) with divers others of the Council, and Commiſſioners of the City of *Briſtol*, your ſelf being then one: Some of the words of which Letter I ſhall here inſert, &c.

We being met together to conſider and adviſe of able and godly men to Preach the Goſpel in Briſtol, *and having experience, and much aſſurance of your faithfulneſs, and ſufficiency for that Work, do deſire you, Sir, that you will pleaſe to come unto us:* And they adding farther, *their care of my maintainance, &c.*

Another large Letter I then received from divers godly people, the inhabitants of the City, ſome of which words I ſhall alſo here inſert,

Dearly beloved, ſince after much waiting upon the Lord, the hearts of the People, generally throughout the City, is ſo much ſet upon you, deſiring to enjoy you in the ſervice of the Goſpel, &c. And ſince our Motion formerly made by our Meſſengers, hath been ſo much proſpered by the Lord in the hearts of our Brethren there, &c. We do therefore earneſtly and very ſeriouſly beſeech you in the Name of our Lord Jeſus, that you will with all convenient ſpeed come to Briſtol *and help us, &c.*

Upon the receipt of which two Letters, and ſome adviſe had with godly friends, I reſolved in the ſtrength and garce of Chriſt, That I would come, though I had much fear and trembling in my own heart, from the apprehenſion I had of the greatneſs of the Work of Chriſt in *Briſtol*, and the inſufficiency I ſaw in my ſelf, ſo that it was not Riches, nor Honours that drew me hither, but meer Conſcience,

ſcience, and Obedience to that Call, which I judged was of, and from the Lord; the thing having never been ſought or deſired by me, which hath much ſupported my Spirit under many tryals and temptations which I have met with ſince.

But all this is little in compariſon of what I have yet (through grace) farther to ſpeak, and that is; That the Lord hath been pleaſed, through his goodneſs, to own me in my Work, ſo that though I am the unworthieſt in the world, yet I truſt I may ſay with a holy reverence, and humble boldneſs, that my record is on high, and that God hath given me a ſeal of my Miniſtry in *Briſtol*, there being many Souls in this City that lay weltring in their bloud of ignorance, and ungodlineſs, when I came hither, that are now, through the riches of grace, made living and pretious ſtones, and are able to give to any man that ſhall ask them, a clear account, of the time when, the place where, the manner how, and the word and inſtrument by which the Lord was pleaſed to turn their Souls unto himſelf, ſeveral of which are ſince received into this Church, and though they ſeem contemptible now in your eyes, and in the eyes of ſome others, yet I have good ground to believe that they are pretious in the ſight of the Lord Jeſus, and will be found in him at his appearance.

Likewiſe I doubt not but I have a teſtimony in your conſcience (though now it ſeem obliterated) that you have found by experience, that Chriſt was with me in my Work, and I am ſure I have often heard it from your mouth (if that were worth any thing) &c.

But I truſt there are hundreds in *Briſtol*, that can ſay, That the Lord hath been, and ſtill is, with my Miniſtry, quickning, comforting, teaching, and refreſhing their Souls, however you and others make it your work to traduce and reproach me, caſting contempt upon me, to weaken my hands, and ſadden my Spirit, and what in you and them lyeth, to diſcourage, and take off people from hearing of me; you ſaying to one in this City, *That I Preach the Doctrine of Devils, &c.* And to another, *That I*

do.

do more hurt to your Way, than all the Preachers in Bristol: Others cry me down as an *Usurper, Unsealed, Unlearned, Ignoramus, &c.* And another in his late Book, loads me with *Scoffs, Jeers, Derisions, &c.* which makes me wonder, That you and they which are so different in other things, yet can all agree, to cast stones at me, and discouragements upon me, who never intended them or you any hurt, &c.

But, through grace, I find this by experience, That all your and their labour (as to this particular) is in vain, for the more you and they strive to beat me down, and to cast me out of the hearts of the people, the more room the Lord gives me in them, and the more prosperous and successful, I trust (and some think) my work is among them, through the help, grace, and goodness of my dear Lord Jesus: I write this with lowliness and humility, without boasting or vanity, to the praise of God, and to the stoping the mouth of envie, &c.

It is true, I am no Preacher of that thing which you, and some of your way, call the Gospel, namely, *To bid every man turn to a Light within him*: neither did I ever read, or hear, that any of the Prophets, Apostles, or holy men of God did preach such a Gospel, &c.

But that Gospel of good newes and glad tydings, which Jesus Christ gives commission and commanded to be published and preached, to all Nations, and to every creature, that Gospel I preach, and you have sometimes born witness to me therein, though now your testimony be vailed, even the Gospel of the grace of God, as *Act.* 20. 24. wherein the everlasting love, grace, and good-will of God in Christ, is freely published and declared to poor lost undone sinners, and the way to eternal life by Jesus Christ, through Faith in his blood and righteousness, &c. this Gospel I preach, pressing all that receive it to give up themselves to Christ in love and obedience, according to the scope and tenor of the Gospel.

But the great Argument by which you would prove me to be no Minister of the Gospel is, my speaking, as you say,

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in the 1 econd branch of your title page) of having *Sarah Latchet* whipt and ſent to Bridwel, &c. Now that the Reader may be informed, and you, if poſſible, convinced of your weakneſs and folly in publiſhing this thing; I ſhall here faithfully relate the truth of that ſtory.

This *Sarah Latchet* was ſometime a Member with the Baptized people in *Briſtol*, but Apoſtatizing from them, was Excommunicated by them, and ſo doth ſeem to have the greater hatred to, and rage againſt the truth, wayes, and people of Chriſt; this *Sarah Latchet* being one of the fierceſt ſort of the people who call themſelves *Quakers*, hath come ſeveral times to diſturbe us in our Meetings: I ſhall mention three times eſpecially.

Firſt, Once in the publick Place after Sermon was done, ſhe fell a rayling at me, as their manner is, with fierce and cruel words, at which time ſhe was only turned out of the place, and nothing done to her.

Secondly, Another time the Church being aſſembled to break Bread, and to celebrate the Lords Supper, this *Sarah Latchet* came into the place, I having ſpoken to the Church a word of Exhortation, in reference to that Ordinance, and addreſſing my ſelf to adminiſter it to the Church, this *Sarah Latchet* came ruſhing up towards the Table, and in the face of me, with a loud ſhrill voice began thus, *O thou deceiver, the plagues of the eternal God, &c.* I ſpake not a word to her, but deſired the Church, to be ſtill in their ſpirits, and to mind the work in hand; one of our Brethren ſtept forth, and took her by the arm, and led her to the door, and put her forth; and this was all the hurt ſhe had at that time.

Thirdly, Another time, the Church being aſſembled, at the uſual time and place of Meeting, one of our Brethren being in prayer, as ſoon as ever he had done, ſhe being preſent in the room, did again with a loud ſhrill voice begin thus, *The Prayers of the wicked are abomination to the Lord, &c.* and ſo ran on a long time, with railing, menacing, dreadful, expreſſions, wher upon I did endeavour to ſtop her, by caſting in ſome words, but it would not be,

ſhe

she still continued to heap up, and threaten plagues and judgements against us; then I went near, thinking to speak a word to her, but she let flee at me with a multitude of rayling, reviling terms, such as they use to give to the Ministers of the Nation, and that in such a fierce and furious manner, as hardly any Scould in the street could parrallel; whereupon I spake these words, or to this effect, *That it were fitter such an idle Huswife as she was, should be whipt, and sent to Bridwel to work, than to go about railing at people as she did.* And when I had spoken these words, I went from her, and she went her way, and never was questioned, nor punished for any of these abuses; and those words I spake but once to her, and this was all I did and the occasion of it, upon which you build your great structure, concluding that I am no Minister of the Gospel, but a Persecutor of the truth, &c. as in your large Letter to me thereupon you declared; and that now in the title page of your Pamphlet you proclaim to the Nation, &c. but I wish you lay a better foundation for your other buildings, lest you prove a foolish builder.

Now I would ask you a few sober Questions.

First, *How comes it to pass, that you can stile* Sarah Latchet *a Servant of Jesus, and publish her so to the world, who is an Apostate, and an Excommunicate person, going on in such a rayling, reviling, fierce, manner, as hath been now declared, and as divers witnesses can prove, whereas there are many pretious Servants of Jesus, and Saints of the most High, now living in* England *and* Bristol, *that have been known to walk with God for many years in uprightness, their foot having held its steps, and not declined from the good wayes of the Lord, neither gone back from the Commandments of his lips, but have esteemed his words, before their appointed food, and have stood fast in the worst of Times, and sorest of Tryals, &c. and yet they must be censured, judged, condemned, and cryed out against by you, as if they were the vilest Persons on earth, and all because they cannot close in with you, and your way? &c.*

Secondly,

Secondly. *How durſt you in your Conſcience ſay, That thoſe raylings, revilings, curſings, and lies, &c. which ſhe uttered, are a teſtifying from the Lord? Do you not bluſh to name, or write ſuch a word? Will* Jehovah, *the great and glorious God of Heaven and Earth, ever own ſuch raylings, revilings, &c. to be a teſtifying from him? Or will he ever juſtifie you, in what you have here written, and publiſhed to the world?* O be aſhamed, and confounded, poor deceived man.

Thirdly, *How will you bring both ends of your Parallel together: you endeavour in your Letter to parallel* Sarah Latchet *with* Paul, *and* Sarah Latchet's *ſufferings with* Paul's *ſufferings, and me with* Paul's *Perſecutors?* Now then let me a little examine your parallel.

1. *Paul* the Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, having received a Commiſſion from heaven, doth accordingly preach and publiſh the glorious Goſpel of the grace, mercy, and love of God in Chriſt to poor ſinners; and likewiſe ſets forth the Lord Jeſus, in his perſon, virtues, and offices, inviting and beſeeching, with all love and tenderneſs, thoſe where ever he came to receive this grace, and believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, &c. And *Sarah Latchet* comes forth rayling, reviling, curſing, &c. *Ergo: Sarah Latchet* and *Paul* are alike.

2. After *Paul* had with meekneſs and love, tendred the grace of God, and the perſon, and vertues of Jeſus Chriſt, the Saviour, as before, ſome did riſe up againſt him, beat him, ſtone him, impriſon him, and whip him, ſo that five times he received forty ſtrips ſave one, with many other ſore and cruel abuſes, as you mention in your Letter out of 2 *Cor.* 11. *&c.*

And *Sarah Latchet*, after ſhe had rayled, reviled, and pronounced curſes againſt people; it was ſaid to her, *It were fitter ſuch an idle Huſwife were ſent to Bridwel*; Ergo, *Sarah Latchet's* ſufferings, and *Pauls* ſufferings, are both alike, &c.

3. *Pauls* Perſecutors, after they had heard the pretious glad-tydings of the Goſpel, and the report of Jeſus Chriſt

made unto them, as before, did actually take, and cruelly beat, stone, whip, and imprison *Paul*, &c. And I after I had been reviled, rayled upon, &c. said of *Sarah Latchet*, *it were fitter she were whipt and sent to Bridwel*, Ergo, *Pauls* Persecutors, and I, were both alike, and under the same condemnation, &c.

Is this good Logick? May not all that read your lines, read your folly? &c. But to go on.

Fourthly, Will you ask your Conscience this question, *Did you not publish and set forth this thing* (*to wit*, *of my not being a Minister of the Gospel*, &c.) *to lay me*, *if you could under contempt and scorn*, *both in the City and Nation*, *though you know in what sence*, *and upon what ground*, *I had denyed the title and dignity of a Minister*, *as I have before declared*: *but you knowing that this was a nail that would go*, *and therefore you strick here*; *and was not this such another piece of envie and hypocrisie*, *as poor Mris.* Prince *did manifest when she came to rayl at me*, *and reproach me at my Lecture at* Nicholas, *when in her Conscience she durst not object against any thing that was delivered*, *though it were often put to her by me*, *but instead thereof*, *after much bitter revilings against me*, *called to the People*, *and bid them to beware of me*, *for she had heard me say*, I had not the Spirit of God, &c.

Now suppose this had been true, That I had at any time uttered my complaint to her, or any others, in the sadness and bitterness of my soul, when under temptation (as the Lord knows what sad hours and dark dayes I have passed through, since I came to *Bristol*) though you and many others little observed it, or enquired after it: but suppose, I say, I had uttered my complaint to her, as she and many others have done to me, was it a Christian-like part in her, to publish this in the face of a Congregation, many of which might be apt enough to take up a prejudice against me? &c. would you, or she, or any other, think it, either honesty, christianity, ingenuity, civility, or humanity in me, if I should publish to the world, what you, or she, or they have at any time uttred to me, as a matter of grief, burden, trouble, sadness, affliction, or temptation, that

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lay upon your, or their ſpirits? now both you and ſhe alſo knew full well the ſad complaints of my ſoul under the ſenſe of my own weakneſs, the ſore and terrible temptations that I encountred with the greatneſs and weightineſs of my work, the many eyes that were upon me, and the great diſhonour that would have come to the name of Chriſt, if I ſhould have miſcarried in my work; which made me to ſee the neceſſity, and prize the excellency and long for the ſupplies of the Spirit of Chriſt, and often to complain of that ſmall meaſure I apprehend I had of it, &c.

But Secondly, Both you and ſhe, and ſome others, know in your Conſciences that there was another ground upon which, and another ſenſe in which, I had ſometimes queſtioned, whether I and many other Chriſtians, had yet received the Spirit: which for the Readers information, and my own vindication, I ſhall now declare: When I lived in *London*, and ſate under the Miniſtry of ſome choice godly men, I did ſometimes hear expreſſions to this effect, That there was a two-fold coming of the Spirit of Chriſt into the hearts of Believers. The firſt was that by which the eyes of mens underſtandings are opened, and they turned from darkneſs to light, Faith and Repentance, wrought in the Soul, converſion, regeneration, or the new birth, effected; and ſo he that was once a dead ſinner, becomes a living Saint or Believer, though as yet but weak, a babe in Chriſt, &c.

The Second work or coming of the Spirit, is that by which the Soul is ſealed, confirmed, eſtabliſhed, filled with joy and peace in believing, and fitted and furniſhed to every good work, that God calls them, whether doing or ſuffering, &c.

Now this put me upon the ſearch of the Scripture, as firſt, *Epheſ.* 1. 13. *After you believed, you were ſealed:* which Scripture relates to that *Acts* 19. 2. *Have you received the holy Spirit ſince you believed? &c.* So *Acts* 8. 14. to 17. *Samaria* having received the Word of God, and believed in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, were baptized by *Philip*

the Deacon, the Church at *Jerusalem*, or rather the Apostles sent forth *Peter* and *John*, that they should pray, that they might receive the holy Ghost, for as yet he was not fallen upon any of them, &c. Another Scripture, I find, *Joh.* 7. 37, 38, 39. *In the last day the great day of the feast Jesus stood and cryed, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, he that believeth on me as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: but this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive, for the holy Ghost was not yet (given) because that Jesus was not yet glorified:* So *Luke* 11. 9. to 13. such as God is a Father unto, are bid to pray, to ask, to seek, and to knock, &c. with assurance, by many Arguments, *that they should receive the holy Spirit:* So in the 14, 15, 16. Chapters of *John*, our Saviour speaking to such as did believe in him, love him, and keep his Commandments, &c. he promiseth to *send the Comforter unto them, even the holy Spirit which the world could not receive, &c.* and to this agree many of the Prophecies both in *Isa. Jer. Ezek. Joel, Zach.* and others.

Now then as to the first work or coming of the Spirit, (namely) to make a man to become a Saint, a Christian, a Believer, a new Creature, &c. I never denied, but alwayes affirmed, that whosoever did believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, or had the least beginning of a work of Grace in their Souls, it was by the Spirit of God, and they had the Spirit of Christ in the first sense, according to. *Rom 8. 9. now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, &c.*

But in the second or latter sense, namely, *to seal, stablish, fill with joy and comfort, &c.* with many other glorious effects which the Scripture speaks of, and which the Saints in the primative times, did enjoy, in this sense I have often said, that I did question, Whether I (then) had, or whether many others in the Church had received the Spirit? and to this you did then assent, &c. And therefore I did often press it in the Church, that we might pray more for that blessed Spirit, according to the command and promise

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of Christ, *Luke* 11. 9. 13. as before; and this is that which I have often called the great legacie of the new Testament, and as Jesus Christ was the great promise of the first or old Testament, so this blessed Spirit is the great promise of the second or new Testament, which all believers are to wait, pray, and long for, as the believers under the first Testament, were to wait and long for the *Messiah*; and this was my meaning, when I have sometimes said, That a man may be a Christian, a Believer, a converted Soul, or a babe in Christ, and not as yet have received the Spirit, I mean still in this latter sense, in respect of sealing, establishing, &c. yet I neither did, nor do expect the Gift of tongues, or working Miracles, &c. neither do I find that the great promise of the Spirit, was principally to that end, though that was accomplished by it, when and how the Lord pleased, as *Heb.* 2. 4 with divers miracles and gifts, or distributions of the holy Ghost, according to his own will, but I find rather that the great promise of the Spirit, is, for such glorious ends as these, &c.

1. To open and reveal the hidden Mysteries of the kingdome of heaven, as *Matth.* 13. 11. *to you it is given to know the Mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, &c.* So 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. to the 14. we read that those things which the eyes of men (as men) have not seen, neither can the natural man perceive, yet God doth reveal by his Spirit, &c. So it is promised in *John*, to lead and guide into all truth, therefore, *Eph.* 1. 17. the Apostle prayes for believers, that they might receive the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, &c.

2. To comfort and chear up poor drooping believers, filling them with all joy and peace, consolation and refreshment, which is one main end for which it is promised: as in 14, 15, 16, Chapters of *John*, to which agree many of the sayings of the Prophets, &c.

3. To heighten and strengthen the Saints with boldness, courage, constancy, and resolution in their Spirits, to do, or to suffer for God, as *Acts* 4 8. *Then* Peter *filled with the Holy Ghost, said, &c.* so to the 19. *vers.* So *Acts* 5. 41. *And they — rejoyced that they were counted worthy to*

suffer

suffer, &c. which thing neither they nor *Peter* could do (a little before, as *Mark* 14. 50. 66 to 71.) But observe, *they had not then received the Spirit*, so *Acts* 16. 25. *Paul* and *Silas* sang in prison

4. To purge and purifie, cleanse and sanctifie believers, and make them holy, as *Isa.* 4. 3, 4. so *Ezek.* 36. 25. to 29. *Joel.* 3. 17. then shall *Jerusalem* be holy, that is, when the Mountains shall drop new wine, and the hills flow with milk; as *vers.* 18. *And the fountain come forth of the house of the Lord, to water the valley of* Shittim.

5. To make poor, dry, barren, empty souls to become fruitful to God, and to grow in grace, *Isa.* 32. 5. *until the Spirit be poured from on high, and the wilderness become a fruitful field*, Isa. 44. 3, 4. *I will pour my Spirt upon thy seed, &c. and they shall spring up, &c.* so *Hos.* 14. 5. *I will be as the dew unto* Israel, *and he shall grow, &c.*

6. To fill the Saints with meekness and love, yea, with endeared love towards Christ, and bowels of pity towards men, as we see it was with the Saints in the primitive times, but is much wanting now

7. To unite the Saints more together in judgement and affection into one heart, and one way, as the Scripture speaks.

8. To make them more exact and spiritual in the use and practise of all Gospel Ordinances, as *Acts* 2. 41, to 47.

9. To beautifie and adorn Christians with every spiritual gift and grace, as *Gal.* 5. 22. *Ezek* 16. 10, 11, 12, 13.

10. To fill them with a mighty Spirit of Faith and Prayer, as the Saints in the primitive times, after the pouring forth of the Spirit had.

In a word it is a Christians *All*, for by it he can do all things, as *Phil.* 1. 19. 4. 13. and without it he can do nothing well, as *John* 15, 5. *Without me ye can do nothing.*

And thus I have declared my judgment fully about this blessed truth, and what I mean by the pouring forth of the glorious Spirit which I so often mention in prayer and preaching, as the great legacy, privilege, and portion of

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the Saints or believers in the New Testament, &c.

Now then let me ask you this Question, Whether it had not been better for you, and those that are gone away with you, that you had set your selves solemnly to seek the Lord by Supplication and Prayer, and so have continued in the wayes, and under the Ordinances of Christ, waiting for that blessed spirit, as many of the Servants of God have done, and still do, &c. rather than to have taken up a Notion of *a Light in every man*, and call that *the eternal Spirit*, as some of your way do, and then jeer and scoff at them, that pray for the Spirit, and reproach them which complain out of their sense of the want of it, as poor Mris. *Prince* did, when she came to revile me at my Lecture, &c. But blessed be the Lord, there are many Churches in *England* and *Wales*, that are now wrestling with the Lord day after day joyntly, and day and night singly (in the deep sense of their wants) for the accomplishment of that glorious, new-Testament promise, and such an Answer is already given to some, both Independant and Baptized, as you call them, that they have no cause to repent of the time they have set apart for that work; and I verily believe, That if the people whom you and others so much despise, go on and continue praying as now they do, for the pouring forth of the blessed Spirit, there will shortly be such a breaking forth of the day of Christ, that all the antichristian foggs, of false doctrins and false worships, will flie and fall, as the darkness before the rising Sun.

And Oh that some men in *England* and *Bristol* that are now wrangling and quarrelling about their humane learning, and scoffing and envying those that have it not, would seriously consider this thing, before their lamp go out in obscurity, and their feet stumble upon the dark mountains, before their arm be dried up, and their eye utterly darkned, &c.

Now before I part with this, I will also clear my self about another expression, that I have sometimes used, and at which many have been offended, and that is about an old and a new Testament-Spirit (though of late to avoid offence,

offence, have forbore it) now by thoſe expreſſions, I did not mean nor intend the Spirit of God, ſo as to call that an old Teſtament Spirit, for I know that Spirit, was one and the ſame from everlaſting, but by an old or new-Teſtament Spirit.

1. I mean the frame and temper of a mans own Spirit, and ſo by an old-Teſtament Spirit, I alwayes mean, that dark, weak, childiſh and low frame and temper of Spirit, which profeſſors generally had, in the time of the old Teſtament, while under the *Moſaical* adminiſtration, with that bondage and fear, that weakneſs and ſadneſs, that did accompany it, &c.

2. By a new-Teſtament Spirit, I alwayes mean, that lively, chearful, active, joyful, bold, ſon-like frame and temper of ſpirit, which the Saints generally in the primitive times under the new Teſtament did enjoy, which is called a Spirit of Adoption, as the other is called a Spirit of Bondage; a full deſcription of what I mean is ſet forth in two Scriptures, as namely, *Gal.* 4. from the 1. to the 7. and *Heb.* 12. from 18 to 24. In which two Scriptures is ſet forth,

Firſt, The weakneſs, darkneſs, childiſhneſs, fear, bondage, &c. of the old-Teſtament ſtate, which is that that I call, the frame, temper, or ſpirit of the old-Teſtament.

And Secondly, There is ſet forth, the light, life, ſtrength, boldneſs, comfort, courage, joy, & rejoycing of the new-Teſtament ſtate, which is that that I call, the frame, temper, or Spirit of the new Teſtament, &c. And whether Chriſtians be not generally, more under the old-Teſtament frame, than under the new, I leave to their experiences: and thus I have fully declared my ſelf, as to theſe two particulars; and if any ſober Chriſtian, into whoſe hands this may come, ſhall apprehend that I am miſtaken in either of them. I ſhall be glad to receive a word from them in love, but I do not expect it from you, to whom I now write, &c.

You farther tell me in your Letter, that you were warned

warned from invisible lights some months past, to beware of me, which you could not believe, till now it breaks out like fire, &c. I conceive those invisible lights, were some secret whisperers that did bring you many stories, both of me, and others, &c. but truly I could discern by visible light, long before you left us, that my speaking was but little acceptable to you, and some others, especially after I did begin to oppose your spleen and passion, though whilst I sate still and silently approved of what you spake, then I was the excellentest man that ever you met with, & you would often, both to my face, and behind my back, applaud and extol me; but when once I began a little to cross you, as many others of the Brethren did, and as some godly men had formerly done (as they saw cause enough) then you and your partie began to fume and fret, and as it was often observed to go out of the Meetings, when I had been to speak, though I did oppose you with all the tenderness that possibly I could, as knowing what a partie you had in the Church, and what influence you had upon them; but now you say the fruits doth appear, and break out like fire, &c.

Q. *And what is it?*] But that I should say, That such an idle Huswife, as is before mentioned, should be sent to *Bridwel*, rather than to go rayling about, as she did: Now I appeal to all Christians upon the face of the earth, what hurt this was, to this poor, rayling, cursing, fierce creature? &c.

2. And was this the ground upon which some of your company spread it about the Country, and place of my nativity, what a persecutor I was become, so that the good people there, that had known me to be of another temper, did wonder, and were troubled, until they understood, what you and your company meant by such things, and that it was because I would not joyn with you and your new Religion, and with the people that call themselves *Quakers*. Again, Was this the ground upon which you did so often cry out against *Judases* in the Church, a little before you left us; but blessed be the Lord, we can now

rejoice, that the innocencie of the upright is cleared, and the *Judases* are discovered, &c. and whether I or you have betraied and crucified the Lord Jesus, in his Saints, in his waies, in his name, and in his truth, I shall humbly leave, &c. I do not boast, but desire with all humilitie and reverence to acknowledge and admire the power, grace, mercy, and goodness of him by whom, I a poor worm have been preserved, whilst such a Cedar, or Star, as you were taken to be, is so sadlie fallen; but it is no more than what some have thought and said long ago, That pride and arrogancie would have a fall, as *Prov.* 29. 23. *But let him that thinketh he stands, take heed lest he fall, &c.* 1 *Cor.* 10. 12.

Since this I have been three times disturbed for which one is now imprisoned.

But now you say, I openly oppose the appearance of Christ, where it is found in life and power, &c. What, because I said of that poor deluded Creature, *It were fitter she were sent to Bridwel?* O poor deceived man, that you should be a professor of Religion, so long, and now come to publish such a piece of folly to the world, as to call the fierce raylings, &c. of these people, *the appearances of Christ, in life and power*; and my speaking that one word to her once, *an opposing of Christ, &c.* whereas she had no hurt done her, nor a word spoken to any Magistrate against her; nay, though she, and others of your way, have 16 or 17 times opposed me, and rayled at me, yet never but one, and that but once was questioned or imprisoned for it, and yet I am cried out against in word and writing by you and your company, as the great persecutor, which now you tell the world you have been warned by invisible lights some months past, to beware of me: But how can you call *Sarah Latchet* the *Servants* of God, and *Witnesses* of Jesus (in the plural number) whereas it was but to she only, and that but once I spake those words, though she rayled at me many times, but ask your own heart, whether your Design were not to draw out my supposed Offence to the world, and then consider, whether instead thereof you have not let out your own folly, envie, and hypocrisi? But where is that meekness, and bearing, that some of you

boast

boast of, *that you would not return evil for evil, but being curſed, you bleſs, &c.* poor creatures, it is an eaſie thing to flatter your ſelves, and ſpeak words, &c. but let any one touch you, though but in a word, and they ſhall find you as rough, both in raylıng and writing, as any: But what would you have done unto me, if I ſhould have come into your Meetings and diſturbed you, and railed at you, &c. as ſhe and others have done at me? you would have ſent me (not to *Bridwel*) but to the bottomleſs pit, if words could have done it? You cloſe your Letter with many ſeeming expreſſions of love and pity: as,

1. That I might ſee the ſandineſs of my foundation.
2. Know the things that belong to my peace.
3. Eſcape the pit.
4. Not ſhut up the kingdom of Heaven againſt my ſelf and others, &c.

1. As for my foundation, I know no other, nor preach no other than that foundation and Corner ſtone which is laid in *Sion*, even Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, and Son of man, in one perſon, upon whom, through grace, I have caſt my ſoul for eternity, and other foundations I look not for, &c.

2. *As to my knowing the things that belong to my peace, &c.* I bleſs the Lord it is the groaning of my ſoul to him, for that bleſſed Spirit of revelation, in the knowledge of the Myſterie of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt, that I may believe more, love more, and obey more, &c.

3. *As for my eſcaping the Pit*: I deſire the like for you: and in order to that, I have conſented to, and helped on, the Admonitions that have been ſent by the Church to you, and the other poor ſouls that are with you, &c.

4. But forthly, *As for my ſhutting up the kingdom againſt my ſelf, and others, &c.* I can ſay, through grace, it hath been, and is daily my great care and work, to preach the kingdom of God freely to ſinners, and to ſet forth the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as the way to that kingdom, and to invite, and encourage all poor ſouls to come into that king-

dom, by Jesus Christ the true door or way, and by the strait gate of believing, which the Scribes and Pharisees, by putting men upon working for life, did shut up against themselves, and others: and who doth so now, but those that bid all men *turn to a Light within them*, and so take them off from believing on the person of Jesus Christ, or looking to be saved by what he hath done, and suffered, wrought, and accomplished for man, &c.

But I suppose your meaning is, That I should give over preaching, and come to you, and your way; I know this hath been the longing desire of many of you a great while: for these were the words of one of your way, the last time I was in your house, *That I kept many from receiving, or embracing the Light*: but I desire to bless the Lord, that through the riches of his grace to my soul, I have been hitherto preserved, and I have seen my Call to, and Work in this City clearer since you left us, than ever I did before, both as to this poor desolate Church, and likewise to many precious souls in *Bristol*, among both of which I trust I may say with humility and comfort, that God hath made me of some use, though I be as nothing, &c. And truly I do hope, that God who chuseth the things that are not, to confound the things that are, &c. wil yet use me, as an instrument for good unto his people in this City, and the rather because, both you with them of your way, and others that are of other waies, do so violently, and causelessly set against me, which makes me sometimes take up the complaint of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Jer. 15.10. *Wo is me, &c. I have neither lent upon usury, nor have men lent me upon usury, and yet every one of them doth curse me, or speak evil upon me*, as some translations read it: but blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that yet my lamp is not gone forth in obscure darkness, &c. And thus I have done with the substance of your Letter, I intend to add a short word to the ensuing part of your Book, but I shall first make a little digression, by joyning an occasional word to what I have now written, &c.

I shall desire you to Consider, Whether you are not by

by this act of yours, in publishing me thus to the world, tickled the hearts, and p'eased the fancies of many, who were full enough of prejudice against me before; nay, are you not joyned as a Brother in bitterness, with him that wrote the late Book, called, *Satan Enthroned in his chair of Pestilence:* Let any judicious Christian compare your Book with the latter part of his, and see whether those two bitter streams, do not both arise from one corrupt fountain; namely, the Spirit that is from beneath: may not I return your own words upon you, which you unjustly charge upon me and this Church, from *Obediah* 11, *Thou wast like one of them, &c.* and is this the kindness of a friend, or the part of a brother? O how truly are those Scriptures fulfilled in you, *Mic.* 7. 5. *Trust ye not in a friend &c.* Jer. 9. 4. *Take ye heed, &c.* for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders. You had written your Letter to me about a year ago; and if you had known ought by me, you might have written more; but for you, now to publish it to the world, and to proclaim it in your Frontispiece, and that in such a subtile manner, that he that reads your title page and my name, would verily think (if they did not know otherwise) that I were some dreadful persecutor, and that I had caused some Servant of Christ to be whipt and punished: but I trust the Lord will look upon my wrong, and your envie; my innocency, and your hypocrisies, &c. but I know it is in vain to write farther to you, and truly had it not been for the vindication of the truth, and satisfact on of some poor souls in this City and Nation, I should have cast your Book, and the other mans Book aside, and never have troubled my self to have answered you or him; but since it is so, that both your Books are spread abroad, and read by many, at which some are grieved, others staggered, and people generally apt to conclude that things are so, as he and you have said, because I am silent and say nothing, as I remember it was with me once before, when a publick Scandal was raised and cast upon me at my first coming to *Bristol*, which the Lord knew, and I in my

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own Conſcience knew, I was as innocent in, as any man or child under heaven, and therefore ſate ſtill about half a year, reſolving my innocency ſhould anſwer for me, &c. which made many conclude I was guilty becauſe I was ſilent, till at length I was forced to ſeek a publick Vindication by the Magiſtrate (which I had) and then the mouths of bad people were ſtopped, and the minds of good people ſatisfied:

So I conceive it might be now, if I were wholly ſilent, as to what you and he do write, though indeed I had reſolved ſilence, and to have given you, and him, and others, leave to have trampled upon me; and were I in a private capacity, I think I ſhould do ſo: but forasmuch as the Lord hath ſet me as a publick inſtrument in his work, and that, that which you and he have written of me, tends much to the defaming of me, and the hindrance of my work, by laying ſtumbling blocks of prejudice, into the minds of people againſt me, I therefore think my ſelf bound for the truths ſake, and for the ſake of ſome good people in this City, being thereunto alſo adviſed and perſwaded by godly friends, to ſet forth a few words of truth and ſoberneſs, both to your Book and his.

And I deſire that neither you nor he will be offended that I joyn you both together in this my Anſwer, for firſt you are much alike Brethren in bitterneſs, againſt the people called Independants and Baptized, as may be ſeen throughout your Book: and in the latter part of his.

Secondly, I find, that he hath often joyned you with me, therefore I think it not improper to coupple him with you, and I hope that neither your friends, nor his, will look upon my ſo doing as any diſparagment to you, or him. Yet I muſt needs ſay in ſome things he is more modeſt than you in that he doth not name me, as you often do, though in ſome things you are more ſerious than he, in that you do not jeer me as he often doth; but both you and he have done what you could, to lay me under contempt and ſcorn to the whole City and Nation, and therefore I ſhall now addreſs my ſelf to anſwer ſome few paſſages in his Book,

Book, though not for your information, but for my own Vindication, and for publick and general ſatisfaction, &c.

And firſt in the 48 page of that his Book, called, *Satan enthroned in his Chair of Peſtilence, &c.* he tells a ſtory, how they, meaning the Church in *Briſtol*, ſend for a Taylor out of *Wales* to be their Teacher, &c. in which he deals very diſ-ingeniouſly, for firſt, he knew that I was ſent for by the Major of the City, ſome Aldermen, many of the Council, and other Gentlemen and Commiſſioners of the City of *Briſtol*, which I take to be the Repreſentative of the City, &c. As likewiſe, I was ſent for by many of the godly inhabitants, as I have elſewhere declared; and that not only to be a Teacher in the Church of *Briſtol*, but to be a publick Preacher of the Goſpel in the City, as I have, through the help and grace of Chriſt, hitherto continued; and he himſelf, at my firſt coming, gave me the right hand of fellowſhip, and profeſſed he was ſatisfied in my Call.

But ſecondly, I was no more a Taylor in *Wales*, than he was any of his former Callings after he came to *Briſtol*: For when I was called to Preach the Goſpel in *Wales*, I left my former Employment, as he did leave his ſeveral Callings, when he took to preaching: the next thing concerning me in his Book, is page 50. where he mentioneth a great Woman, that had three Children unbaptized: the truth of which I ſhall relate, by which the falſeneſs of his Relation will appear, &c. There was about the time of my coming firſt to *Briſtol* a godly woman, one at whoſe Husbands houſe, the Church did often uſe to meet; ſhe having been delivered of a Child, did about a month after deſire the Church to meet at her houſe, to render praiſe to the Lord, and to ſpend ſome time in Prayer and conference, &c. accordingly the Elder, that then was, did upon the firſt day of the week appoint that the next Meeting ſhould be at ſuch a place, to ſuch an end: now when the Church was met, ſhe deſired that her Children might alſo be preſented to the Lord by Prayer, both that which ſhe then lay in with, and one more about the age of two

years,

years, whether any more of her Children were then present, I do not remember; but the like was done again about two years after, when the Lord gave her another Child, and as it hath been done for many others upon the like occasion, and as I have known it often done in *Wales*, and I here recommend it to all sober Christians, especially such as are dissatisfied in their judgments and Consciences, about Infants Baptism, namely, That when any godly Woman, a Member of a Congregation, hath received such a mercy, she should at some convenient season present her self with her Child in the Church, that Praise may be rendred to the Lord on her behalf, presenting her Child also to the Lord by Prayer, &c. at which time the Parents may declare in the Congregation the name of the Child, that it may be entered into the Book, where the names of the Congregation are written, as the Children of the Church, who upon occasion may be mentioned to the Lord as the seed of the faithful, that when these Children come to age, and the Lord shall give them to profess Faith in Christ, and that they do believe with all their hearts, as *Acts* 8. 37. they may then be admitted to the Ordinances of Christ, both Baptism, and the Lords Supper, as Believers were in the Primitive times, *Acts* 2. 41, 42. this I leave to the Consideration of all, but especially such as do not see ground to sprinckle their Children, and I the rather mention this, because there are many who since they left of Infant Baptism, that are (as I conceive) too remiss in the duty of thankfulness, and too careless of the pretious Souls of their Children, &c.

Now this was all, that I know, that was in the eye and intent of this godly Woman, and this was the utmost which was done at that time, concerning the Woman and her two children, (which this man calls a blood-daring attempt) which I desire the judicious Reader to consider, &c. As for this jerking, jeering, quibling, and scoffing at the learned Teacher, the reverent Congregation, the mock-Ordinance, and dry Baptism, &c. I shall not answer him, lest I should be like unto him, neither can I say

what

what diſcourſe ſhe had with the other diſcreet Gentlewoman which he mentioneth, but this I know, the Woman was a very judicious Chriſtian, and was well informed and ſatisfied about the unwarrantableneſs of Infant-Baptiſm, and was her ſelf ſhortly after Baptized, according to the true intent, manner and adminiſtration of that Ordinance, ſo that this was no invention to give her ſatisfaction, as he ſaith; neither did ſhe or any of the Congregation look upon this as Baptiſm, for both ſhe and they (for ought I know) were fully ſatisfied againſt that practice, before I had ever any acquaintance with her or them; and for his jerking, and jeering again about prayer, before and after and about the words of Inſtitution to the new Ordinance, &c. All which might better become the mouth of a Stage-player, than the pen of a Miniſter. And for his ſaying the Children were as much heathen as before; truly I truſt they had more benefit by this ſolemn act of the Churches prayer, than if he had in his way baptized them; but I did not think till now, that he had held that Children were made Chriſtians by Baptiſm.

The next thing he mentions is, about my being Baptized at *London*, &c. I had two reaſons for my being Baptized there rather than here: Firſt, becauſe I am a Member of a Church there, who are of the ſame judgement, as to this particular: Secondly, becauſe I knew none there that had that latitude in their Principles, as to Baptize me, unleſs I ſhould come off from this Church in point of Communion, which in my conſcience I could not do, I knowing them to be a pretious godly people, how ever now under contempt; but that I did it there, or that I concealed it at all to ſave my Maintenance, that is not true; for I did publickly own it as ſoon as I did come home, though with that moderation and tenderneſs, as not to grieve or offend any, but as for his jerking and jeering, at my falling from dry Baptiſm to Dipping, &c. I ſhall not anſwer him: But for that godly man Mr. *Jeſſe*, whom he calls an *Anabaptiſt*, Teacher of *London*, I ſhall not ſay much for him, he hath grace enough to bear his reproches,

onely this I muſt ſay, his coming hither was not to perform any *Biſhop like* confirmation, as this man ſeems to intimate; but rather to endeavour the ſetling and eſtabliſhing the minds of the People of this Citie, againſt the pernicious Doctrin of the *Quakers*; and I believe his endeavours were not ſucceſsleſs in that thing. Again, for my becoming an open profeſſed Dipper, (as he ſaith) though I abhor his jeering, yet I do own the word and practice, and therein I do no more than all the Preachers in *Briſtol* do, for they Baptize and Preach, and I Preach and Baptize; onely they Baptize Infants, and I Baptize Men and Women, as *Philip* did, *Acts* 8. 12. and whoſe practice is moſt juſtifiable, theirs or mine, I refer to the Scriptures in their proper and genuine ſenſe to determine, and to any judicious impartial Scholar to interpret, as *John* 3. 23. *Acts* 8. 37, 38, 39. *Acts* 10. 47, 48. *Acts* 22. 16. But for my unchriſtening him and his Children; I never uttered ſuch a word; but if my practice grounded upon Scripture do it, I ought not to be blamed: Likewiſe for his unchriſtianlike dealing with that godly man, Mr. *Tombs*, publiſhing his name to the World; I ſhall ſay little, for he hath wiſdom and grace, either to anſwer him, or to bear his reproaches, onely this I perceive by a Letter from Mr. *Tombs*, that the thing is falſe; And for his calling Mr. *Tombs* our greateſt Champion, &c. truly the man is much miſtaken, for we do not lean upon Man for our practice, we having both the Command and example of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and his bleſſed Apoſtles, recorded in Scripture, as *Matt.* 28. *Mark* 16. *Luke* 3. 23. Chriſt himſelf was Baptized when he was about 30 years of age; ſo that Mr. *Tombs*, is not our Champion: But for his miſ-drawn conſequences, how I can give the Lords Supper to the Devils children, if Mr. *Tombs* had ſaid ſo, as he writes of him, would it therefore follow, that I, and all others, muſt be of Mr. *Tombs* his mind in that thing? I cannot ſee this to be a neceſſary conſequence, &c. but I do abhor and deteſt any ſuch uncharitable cenſoriouſneſs, and I believe Mr. *Tombs* doth ſo alſo, &c.

He

He asketh further, by what authority I make a single judgement to my self; I ask again, how he durst to say that I make a single judgement to my self, when as there are many Churches, and many men both learned and godly, that are of my judgement in this particular, so as to hold communion with persons differing in that point? and so I do administer the Lords Supper to this people in *Bristol*, as they are a Church of godly sober Christians, believing in Christ, though some of them mis-baptized, yet none of them deny the Ordinance of Christ, onely some of them have not light to see the right Administration of it, but reckon their Infant Baptism sufficient; yet as further light comes in, they are willing to walk up to it, in the mean time we can bear with them in love, as we desire them and others, to bear with us in other things.

As for that mis-construed passage in my Lecture, about dry breasts, which he applies to Infant Baptism, &c. 1. I deny that ever I spoke those words in such terms: 2. Much less to that sense, but I have often prayed against that sore judgement threatned, *Hosea* 9. 14. and that I might not have a miscarrying womb, so as not to bring any soul to Christ by conversion; or dry breasts, so as not to feed or refresh any poor thirsty soul, that comes to wait upon God in his Ordinances, as I fear it is with many Congregations in *England*; and this was the substance and sense of what I spake, though as for Infant-Baptism, I have declared and do declare my dislike of it; yet so as not to judge or condemn any godly man, that thinks he hath Warrant to do it, &c.

And whereas he saith, That the professed, thorow-paced *Anabaptists*, leave me, and would not joyn with me, and therefore commends them that they are true to their principles, and do not juggle, implying that I am not so, but do juggle, &c. Truly I know no thorow-pac'd, godly man, either *Anabaptist*, or others in *Bristol*, but do shew love and respect to me in their way, onely in this, they walk according to their light, and so do I; but they think I am too large in my Principles, and I think they are too

ſtrait in theirs; yet we do not differ, but can bear with each other in love, though for my juggling or diſ-ingenuity I paſs not to be judged by him, &c. though I know it would pleaſe him better, if I were of a furious, impetuous, violent ſpirit, ſo as to break all in pieces, and ſet the Citie and this Church in a flame, and thereby make my ſelf to be abhorred of all both good and bad; but, I truſt, as the Lord hath, ſo he will graciouſly give me a more ſober, ſweet ſpirit, to walk tenderly towards all, and to do good to all: And truly I can ſay, through grace, that I do not love any man the more or leſs for his judgments ſake, whether he be Preſbyterian, Independent, Baptized, &c. But where ever I ſee the Image of Chriſt appear (which is love and holineſs) there I deſire to love and honor.

And for his large Parentheſes, from page 52. to page 55. wherin he makes an Apologie for his bitterneſs & paſſion, (as he had need enough to do) and then cloſes with a propoſal, that if we will but acknowledge his Miniſtery, Churches, and Ordinances, to be according to the Inſtitutions of Chriſt, and ſuch as with whom we will hold communion, then he will write a Retractation, &c.

I anſwer, let him firſt but prove that they are ſo, and then we will ſoon acknowledge it; but till then, though he be ſo wiſe as to propoſe it, we ſhall not be ſo fooliſh as to grant it, &c.

And as for his Marginall Note upon page 55 about our being thought to own their Miniſtery, becauſe we hear ſome of them. Truly, I think, he had need not ſpeak of that, for few of us do hear him, or intend it, till he be of another temper, yet I do not refuſe to hear any ſober, godly man, though I muſt needs ſay, I have but little comfort in, or incouragement to, the hearing of ſome, who are ſo often venting their paſſion and bitterneſs, &c.

The next thing concerning me is, *pag.* 55. where he layes an accuſation againſt me, and the Society with whom I walk, that we neglect d (for a long time) the Declarations of his (Highneſs) for ſolemn meetings, &c. whereby he endevours if he could, to render me, and this Church, obnoxious in the

eyes

eyes of the Governours of *England*; but, through mercy, the chief Magistrate, and chief Governours of this Common-wealth, have more wisdom and grace, than to hearken to such accusations, especially from men of his temper; but if I were so wicked, and void of ingenuity, as to go about to accuse men for such neglects, I might find matter enough to write and publish against my neighbours; but I abhor and detest such an envious and unworthy spirit, &c. But I do not remember that ever this Church neglected one such meeting, neither did I ever omit above once or twice, at the most, preaching publickly, as I durst appeal to the whole Citie to bear me witness; but suppose I had upon the change of the Government, being scrupled or dissatisfied, so as to omit once or twice preaching, are there none in *England* or *Bristoll* have done the like, and is it the part of a Minister to rake up old Stories, to present to the ears of the Magistrate, and to publish to the Nation to incense them against a person or people that live peaceably under, are subject unto, and make supplication for those that are in authority, as the Scriptures require, *Titus* 3. 1. 1 *Tim.* 2. 1, 2. and as we are well known to do, &c. I shall say no more but the Lord rebuke the Spirit of Envie, &c.

As for many other things in his Book, both concerning me and the Church with whom I walk; as first, his jeering at our cutting out Churches according to our fancied primitive patern, and our being mar'd in the shaping, &c. wherein he pleaseth himself, and men like himself: And secondly, his gross mistake in laying the blame of all the mischief the Quakers have done in *Bristoll*, with many other evils and falsities to the charge of this poor Congregation, some of whom have stood as much, and born as full a testimony against the principles and practices of those miserable deluded people, as ever he hath done, and perhaps to better purpose, &c.

Now as for his large and unlearned Discourse about an ungodly learned man, being fitter to preach than a godly man, that wanteth onely human learning, in respect of divers

Tongues

Tongues; as likewise his supposed insufficiency of the Spirit of Christ, to furnish and accomplish, fit and enablemen to that work, &c. I shall not undertake to answer every particular that he asserts about this matter, from *pag.* 62. to *pag.* 66. Onely if I might be thought worthy to inform such a man as he is, or any other of his mind, I should advise them to take heed of grating upon, jerking against, slighting or undervaluing of that blessed Spirit of the Lord Jesus, in any of its Offices, operations, effects, or different administrations, in and among the People or Church of God; I say, I should advise them to take heed, lest when God sets the solitary in families, the rebellious dwell in a dry land, and whilst some are like trees planted by the waters, never ceasing to yeild their fruit, others be like the Heath in the Desart, that should not see when God cometh, but inhabite the parched places in the wilderness; *For all the Trees of the field shall know, that the Lord can bring down the high Tree, and exalt the low Tree, he can dry up the green Tree, and make the dry Tree to flourish*; yea, and by the *pouring forth of the Spirit from on high can make the Wilderness become a fruitful Field, and the fruitful Field to be counted for a Forrest*, as *Ezek.* 17. 24. *Isa.* 32. 15.

He layes it upon some as a reproach, *page* 62. That we teach by the Spirit, &c. I desire humbly to acknowledge and attribute it unto the blessed Spirit of Christ, that I have at any time been, or now am enabled in any measure to speak or publish any truth of God, either to the conversion of sinners, or to the edification or consolation of the Saints and People of God; and truly if this man do not lean and depend upon the help of the Spirit in his work of preaching, I shall not much wonder, if his Ministry prove as I have sometimes said or feared, many mens have done, as a miscarrying Womb, and dry breasts, notwithstanding all their great learning, of which they seem to boast, &. He further demands, *page* 62. whether all that have the Spirit can teach publickly, &c. First, if by teaching publickly, he mean preaching and publishing what God hath done for them; and likewise declaring to others what

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the Lord hath taught them, &c. Then I answer it is the duty of all Christians so to do, 1 *Pet.* 4. 10. *As every man hath received the gift, so let him minister the same, &c.* as *Eldad* and *Medad* did, *Numb.* 11. though one man envied, and another complained, as some do now, yet *Moses* the man of God, he approved of it, &c.

But secondly, if by preaching publickly, he mean a publick and solemn undertaking the work of preaching &c. Then I answer, I do not think that every one, that hath the Spirit of Christ in him, or the work of grace in his soul, is fit to be a publick Preacher; for there are diversities of gifts, and differences of administrations, as appears, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4. to the 11. Yet, where the Spirit of God hath fitted any, and the People of God that know them well, do see them fit, and judge them fit, and approve of them publickly, calling them thereunto, these may be fit to teach publickly, at least to their own Nation, as the 70 Disciples were, *Luke* 10. 1. though they had no gifts of Tongues as we read of, no more than the twelve Apostles had, during the time of their preaching to their own Nation, before the Assention of Christ; and that they were to preach to all Nations according to their second Commission, *Matt.* 28. *Mark* 16. yet I do not in the least slight, despise, or undervalue learning, nor learned men, that have grace with it, and do not scornfully trample upon them that want it; but to say that no man may preach without it, is to make a law, where Christ hath made none; for the seventy Disciples, and twelve Apostles, did preach long before the day of *Pentecost*, &c.

He likewise demands, who will step forth and tell him, (and not lie) that the Spirit doth teach them to understand the meaning of the word Justification, or Adoption, &c. I answer, if none but such as can speak Greek and Latin, can understand what Justification and Adoption is, &c. how then can any that have not Greek or Latin, believe they are justified or adopted, seeing that it is another Maxim in the Schools, that no man can believe more than he doth understand: But surely those Souls that have been first enlightened by the Word and Spirit of Christ, to see

and

and know their loſt condition, while under ſenſe of condemnation; and hath alſo been led by the ſame Spirit through the Word of grace, to believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt with all ther hearts, and by his pretious blood, to ſee themſelves freed from condemnation, and in his righteouſneſs to be made righteous, aod ſo to find the comfort of it in ſome meaſure in their own ſouls, they can ſpeak of it to the praiſe of God, and to the edification of others, and that by the help and aſſiſtance of the ſame bleſſed Spirit, yea perhaps more ſenſibly, feelingly, plainly, and profitably, than the moſt learned Doctor in the world, that knows it onely ſpeculatively, by learning, reading, and ſtudying.

As for that ſcornful word *unlettered*, which he doth ſo often uſe, and caſt as a reproach upon ſome men, &c. I anſwer, truly ſome of us do know our Letters as well, and can put them together into Syllables and Sentences as right, and pronounce them as diſtinct and plain, perhaps as himſelf; but I ſhall not ad to this, onely conclude with *Prov.* 3. 34. *Surely the Lord ſcorneth the ſcorner, and giveth grace to the lowly.* And I deſire ſeriouſly to weigh, and to commend to all ſober Chriſtians, thoſe words of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 1. from 19 to 29. and *Chap.* 2. from 1. to 15. and *Chap* 3. 18, 19, 20. by all which it appears, the great Apoſtle of Chriſt, was of another mind, than this man ſeems to be. He demands *page* 65. what an unlettered Teacher, or Ignoramus would ſay, if he were to diſcourſe with a *Papiſt*, or an Adverſary about Juſtification, &c. Truly, I would ſay this, if any ſhould out of pride, curioſity, and vain confidence, run without a call, to diſcourſe with an Adverſary, (*Papiſts* or others) about that or any other point of Chriſtianity, &c. he might expect that the Lord might juſtly leave him to himſelf, and ſo he might betray, or ſhame the truth, and ſo might it be with the moſt learned Teacher in the world.

But ſecondly, if a godly man were providentially, or clearly called, to maintain or defend, that or any other truth of God againſt an Adverſary, (*Papiſt* or others) he going in the fear of the Lord, and in a ſenſe of ſelf-inſufficiency,

ſufficiency, in faith and hope of the preſence and aſſiſtance of the grace and Spirit of Chriſt, he might expect according to his promiſe, *Matt.* 10. 9. *Take no thought for it ſhall be given you in that ſame hour, what ye ſhall ſpeak.* And verſe 20. *For it is not ye which ſpeak, but the Spirit of your Father which ſpeaketh in you.* And how truly was this fulfilled in the *Martyrs*, both in plain Country-men, and alſo Women, yea, young Youths and Mayds, who diſcourſing about points of Chriſtian Religion, and diſputing with men of as profound Learning, as ſome are now, who boaſt ſo much of it, namely, the *Popiſh Biſhops* and *Doctors*, and how thoſe poor *Martyrs* did by the help of the bleſſed Spirit, without Latin or Greek, confound thoſe enemies of truth, and aſſert and maintain both the Doctrin of Juſtification, and other points of Chriſtian Religion, as the Hiſtory of Acts and Monuments do ſufficiently declare; and though we have no cauſe to preſume, yet we have good ground to hope and believe, that the ſame God, will by the ſame Spirit, give in the ſame ſupplies to his Servants in the ſame caſe, if he ſhould again call them to it, or if he ſhould call any of us to aſſert and maintain the bleſſed Doctrin of Juſtification, or to deſpute the glorious privilege of Adoption. And whereas he ſaith, *page* 56. That we give out our ſelves to be gifted Brethren, and ſo fit for the work of the Miniſtry, &c. For my own part I do not know that ever I gave out ſuch a word, and the Lord knows, that I have lower and meaner thoughts of my ſelf; and truly had not the importunity and perſwaſions of ſome prevailed with me, beyond what I thought of my ſelf, I think I had never been an eye-ſore to this man in *Briſtol*, nor a trouble to any others in the work of preaching; and if he or any other can make it appear to me, that it is the will of God, that I ſhould give over my preſent work, I truſt it is not all the Gold and Silver in *Briſtol*, that ſhould hire me to continue in it; but truly (as other things) ſo the violent oppoſition that I meet with from men of divers ſorts, do much confirm that it is the will of God, that I ſhould continue in my work of preaching, &c. And ſo long (though I ſhould meet with greater difficulties than

ever I have yet done) I trust I shall go on with it, expecting the presence of Christ with me; and his blessing upon me therein. I do not at all reflect upon those godly men, that he quotes *page* 66, 67. though I cannot but wonder that a man should express so much bitterness against *Anabaptists*, as he doth in his Book, and yet seem so to applaud a baptized man, that is a person of honor, &c. Likewise how a man can speak so contemptuously against Separation, and separated Churches, and yet seem so to applaud that eminent Dr. *Owen*, who is a man so eminently for the Congregational way, that some men call *Independency* or *Separation*; which makes me to think, that if all the people in *England* and *Bristol*, which are called *Independents* or *Anabaptists*, were great or in high places, he would love them, or make them believe so, &c.

But thirdly, for that godly man Mr. *Baxter*, whose face I never saw, yet do I highly honor & esteem for some of his works, and for what good I hear of him, yet I see no ground, why I should so understand Mr. *Baxter*, or the other two, as this man seems to force their meaning; for, admit it be true, that an ungodly learned man, may know as much, or more, of the literal and grammatical sense of Scripture, than a gracious man may do, which is all that they affirm; doth it therefore follow, that a godly unlearned man, (if it were proper to call any so) may not understand and know, publish and declare the truth of Christ, to their own comfort, and the edification of others, for my own part I cannot see this to be an infallible consequence, and I am confident that two of those men are otherwise minded; and if godly Mr. *Baxter* should mean so, yet I know, there are many others of like eminency, both for Learning and Godliness, that are of another mind in this particular, as I might abundantly shew from their works that are extant, as likewise that experience God hath given us in this later age, of his owning, blessing, and prospering, such in the preaching of the Gospel, to the conversion of many souls, both in *England* and *Wales*, &c. But what I have here written may be sufficient to disprove what he doth falsly assert, *page* 67. that the

pretence

pretence of preaching by the Spirit is but a pious fraud, to set up our selves in the hearts and consciences, and consequently in the purses of people, &c which thing he again mentions, *pag* 51, 52 where he jeers at my contribution, calling it a Feeling argument &c. wherein he seems to compare me to the Lawyers, who account a good Fee to be a feeling argument in their Clyents cause: But I shall not answer him, onely as the Proverb is, *It is the property of a covetous Man to think every thing too much that another hath.* But he draws up the result of all, *pag.* 68 and concludes, that the in-let and out-let, the fore-door and back-door of all our miseries, is an ignorant, unlettered, and contemptible Ministery.

If by the word (*Our*) he mean our misery in *Bristoll*, then I answer, Surely it is strange, that so great a flood of evill and misery should come in at so narrow a door, there being but one unlettered, uncalled Minister in *Bristoll* (in his sense) all the rest (be they what they will) are learned and called, constituted and established Ministers, as he mentions again, pag. 60, &c. No doubt but the Princes of Israel, through the instigation of the Prophets, thought the like of *Jeremiah* when they were wroth with him, smote him, and put him in prison, and when they said unto the King *We beseech thee let this man be put to death, for he seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt.* So likewise *Amaziah* the Priest of *Bethel*, when he sent to *Jeroboam* King of Israel, saying, *Amos hath conspired against thee, &c.* poor *Amos* he had not indeed been bred a Prophet, neither was he the son of a Prophet, but a Herdsman and a gatherer of Summer fruit; and now he must be banished the Kings Chappel as a conspirator: this was hard measure, but God provided better for him. Reader, I do not compare my self with *Jeremiah* and *Amos*, but onely to let thee see that as *Solomon* saith, *That which hath been is now, and there is no new thing under the Sun.* 1.

Jer. 37. 15. 38. 4

Amos 7. 10. 14

But secondly, if by the word *Our misery*, he mean the misery and calamity of *England* first or last; truly then I shall grant and say as he doth, that the in-let and out-let, fore-door and back-door of much of *Englands misery* (and consequently of *Bristols*) is an ignorant, ungodly, false, proud, scandalous, 2.

ſoul-murdering Miniſtery, who have made themſelves contemptible and baſe in the eyes of all good men, and in the conſciences of many bad. And though (as I have heard) there were two thouſand of them petitioned againſt in the time of the long Parliament, and many of them then pluckt up by the roots both in *England* and *Wales*; beſides what hath been ſince laid aſide for ſcandall and inſufficiency, by other Committees and Commiſſioners appointed for that purpoſe: yet I think *England* hath cauſe enough ſtill to mourn for, complain of, and pray againſt, a great part of the Miniſtery thereof: I do not ſpeak this of all, nor intend it to all; for I doubt not to affirm againſt the Quakers, that God hath many pretious ſervants in the Miniſtery, both among thoſe called *Presbyterians*, and them called *Independents*, and the *Baptized*, and ſome that are of, or under none of theſe names; yea, both learned and unlearned, &c. who yet are faithfull to the Lord Jeſus, and do prefer the converſion and ſalvation of pretious ſouls, before all the treaſures in the world, and who do rejoyce to ſee that work of God carried on by any, either learned or unlearned, as men now ſpeak; and I truſt, that as the Lord, who holds the Stars in his right hand, will eſtabliſh ſuch; So the time is near, when men ſhall not wear a rough garment (or a prophetical garb) to deceive, but that the falſe Prophets and unclean ſpirits ſhall paſs out of the Land, and that God will raiſe up, and give Paſtors, according to his own heart, for faithful is he that hath promiſed, who alſo will do it.

And whereas he ſaith, page 68. That you ſhall know them (to wit the ignorant and unlettered Miniſters) by this Badge or Character, they are ſeparating, factious, and ſchiſmaticall, &c. I remember theſe were words much in uſe, and caſt as brands upon the godly people called Puritans, by the Biſhops and their Clergie about 20, or 30 years agoe, and how it comes to paſs that theſe words are taken up again, I know not, unleſs it be that the ſame ſpirit that was in the Biſhops and their Clergy is again revived: and if ſo, then they in whom it is, had beſt take heed that they apply thoſe Nicknames righter than the former did, leſt, &c.

But I ſhall give another Badge or Character of thoſe that

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I mean, and that is, you ſhall alwayes know them by their pride, envy, and covetouſneſs, or their ſcorning, reviling and perſecuting all thoſe that differ from them; and therefore as he commends the caution and counſel of the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 16. 17, 18. So ſhall I make bold humbly to recommend the caution and counſel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *Matth.* 7. 15, 16. *Beware of falſe Prophets, &c. for by their fruits you ſhall know them.* I do not ſpeak this of any godly man or men, for I know no godly men can do ſo as above.

Now for his cloſing word to the Miniſters that are lawfully called, &c. if by lawfully called he mean Paſtors or Elders, called, choſen, conſtituted, ordained and appointed to office in Churches, and by Churches, according to the New Teſtament, and according to the example and practice of the Churches of Chriſt both in New *England* and Old, then I freely cloſe with him therein; for ſuch a Calling and Ordination I own and plead for according to Scripture.

But if by Miniſters lawfully called, he mean all the Pariſh Miniſters in *England* or *Briſtoll* (as ſuch) then I cannot but wonder how any man pretending to godlineſs, durſt ſo to abuſe that pretious Scripture, *Acts* 20. 28. and how he will be able to prove that Pariſhes are ſuch Churches, and that all Pariſh Miniſters (are ſuch) and by the holy Ghoſt made Overſeers in the ſenſe of that Scripture; for my own part I muſt be ſilent, and ſo I think might he well have been. It is true the 29 verſe may in a ſenſe be rightly applied to ſome men in *England* that call themſelves Miniſters, who ſince the Apoſtles times, and the apoſtaſie that followed, have like grievous Wolves entred in, not ſparing the flock, &c. I write not this of, nor intend it to any godly man of any judgement whatſoever.

But as for the reſt of his jerks, jeers, quibles, ſcoffs, deriſions, reproches and untruths, which he hath caſt upon me, with all the injury and wrong that he hath (thereby) done to me, I ſhall lay it at my feet looking upon it as the fruits of a froathy brain, and the products of a ſpleeniſh temper, and ſhall not beſtow a pen full of ink, or one minutes time to anſwer it, but do rather in my heart wiſh and deſire, that he may ſo repent of this piece of folly and wretchedneſs, whereby he hath harde-

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ned the hearts, and opened the mouthes (of many againſt me) that it may do his ſoul no more hurt another day than it doth me at preſent; in the mean time I reſolve to ſit down in ſilence as to him, &c.

And now I return again to you *Dennis Hollister*, to cloſe up my anſwer to your Book, and I cannot but take notice (as many others do) of your ſhamefull abuſing that pretious upright ſervant of Jeſus Chriſt *Robert Simſon*, though I ſuppoſe, he will clear himſelf, or (at leaſt) his innocency will anſwer for him, and ſtop your mouth another day: In the mean time I cannot but bear a teſtimony of his integrity and your impudency, in that you do ſo fiercely and falſly charge him to be a lyar; whereas I can teſtifie that the thing was true, which he, as meſſenger of the Church, did admoniſh you of; namely, that you ſhould ſay, that the Scripture was a blind and plague to Souls; which thing you did ſpeak at a publick meeting in your own houſe, as I doubt not but there are more than twenty perſons, ſome of the Church, and others not of the Church, who can alſo teſtifie the ſame. Whether your meaning was then as now you write, *pag.* 18, 19. I ſhall not diſpute; but that you did ſpeak thoſe words is true, and no lye invented, nor lye proſecuted, &c. Therefore if there be any lyar in this thing, you are the lyar; yet I durſt not judge you to the Lake, but rather pray & hope that God may ſhew a miracle of mercy in ſaving you from it, and do adviſe you to take heed how you throw them into the Lake, or under condemnation, whom Jeſus Chriſt hath by his pretious blood, and perfect righteouſneſs graciouſly freed from it. And as for the ſin of lying, you will do well to caſt the beam out of your own eye, &c. For *Robert Simſon* is a man as well known in *Briſtoll* to be a truth ſpeaker, and a juſt, uptight, conſcientious dealer, as any of thoſe that do accuſe him. I ſhall ſay no more, but let every man prove his own work, *Gal.* 6. 4.

But paſſing by many of thoſe impertinencies in your book, I find that after your letter to me, there is an anſwer to 16. *Queries*, formerly ſent to you, or to the people called *Quakers*, and afterwards printed by that pretious ſervant of Chriſt, *John Penderves* before his death.

I might commend your wit, in putting forth your answer after the man is dead: Secondly, I observe that these sixteen Queries have been once answered (in a fashion) by *James Naylor*, a man then highly admired and cried up by you, or those of your way, as a man of great infallibility, which perhaps might help to puff him up with pride, by which he came to fall into this sad condemnation, &c.

Now whereas some of your way, boast much of your being all led by one and the same Spirit, so that though they were at a great distance, yet they all speak but one thing, &c. Now let any man read and compare your answers with *James Naylors*, and see how near they come together, unless it be in railing, judging, and censuring, though therein I must needs say his answers are more moderate than yours.

And whereas a late Writer for your way, puts it by way of derision to the Preachers in *England*, that if six of the most able Doctors, should have a portion of Scripture given them to interpret, and they shut up in six several rooms, &c. that perhaps not two of the six agree in their interpretation.

Now suppose you had taken four more of your Teachers, (such as some of you had challenged the whole world to accuse of sin) and made them six in number, and have given them these sixteen Quaries apart to answer, perhaps they would have come as near, as you and *Naylor* do in your answers, or as six of the weakest Preachers in *England* might have done in their interpreting a place of Scripture.

As for your word to *England*, I shall say little to that, but desire rather to mourn for the evils and abominations therein, as I know it is my duty and yours also, if you knew how to do it; and so I conclude, expecting that I shall have many sharp Arrows of bitter words shot at me, both by you and others; but for that I matter not much, being conscious to my self, that I have written in plainness words of truth and soberness, and that I have been pressed by others to do what I have done, and this rather, for the vindi-

vindication of truth, than of my self, and rather for the sakes of some godly people who may read it, than for your sakes to whom I direct it; and if you or others, shall dip your pens in Vineger or Gall to write again, I hope I shall bear it, or modestly reply to it, though my thoughts, are rather to suffer my self to be trampled upon, then again to answer a word, seeing that of making many Books there is no end, and much study is a wearines of the flesh, *Eccles.* 12. 12. And knowing also that neither you nor others, can speak or write me so vile, as I can and do, see, and acknowledge my self to be, as in my self, yet is my perfection and compleatnes in another, even in Christ Jesus my Lord; in whom is all righteousnes, all strength, and all fulnes, laid up for all those, that sensibly see and feel that in them, (that is in their flesh) dwelleth no good thing, &c, and thereupon do look unto him, to receive of his fulnes, grace for grace; in which glorious person, all that do believe are justified, and by whose grace and blessed Spirit, they are in a measure sanctified, and through whose pretious blood, and perfect righteousnes, mediation and intercession, they shall be eternally saved, and in whose way, I could as gladly now as ever, subscribe my self,

Your Friend,

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FINIS.

There is now in the Press, a Book written by *Robert Purnel*, entituled, A little Cabbiner, richly Rored with all sorts of heavenly varieties; wherein there is a Remedy for every Malady, viz. Milk for Babes, and Meat for strong Men, and the ready way for both to obtain, and retain assurance of Salvation: being an Abridgement of the sum and substance of the true Christian Religion; and to be sold at the *Three Bibles* in *Paul's* Church-yard.